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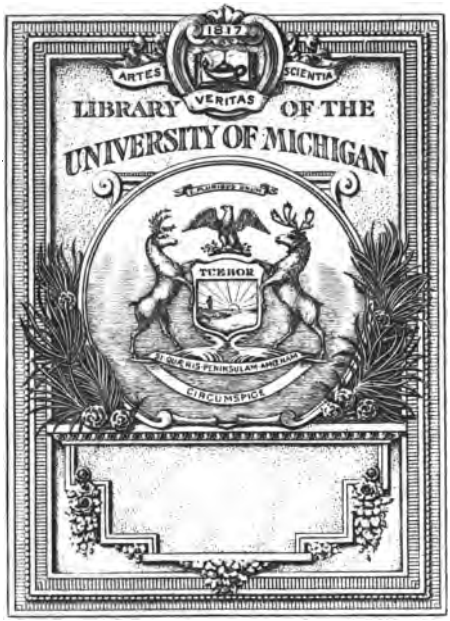
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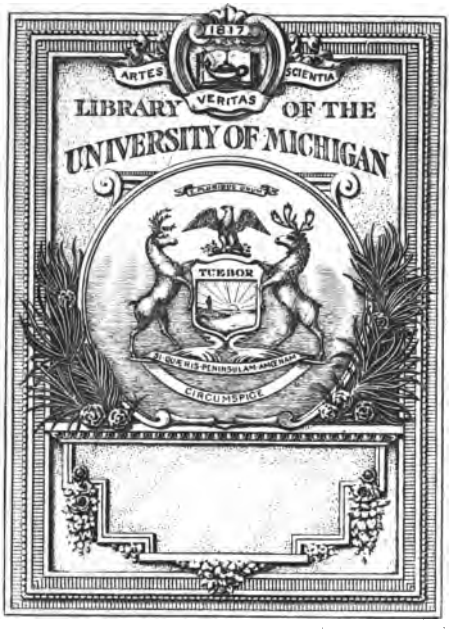
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MEMOIRS

OF THE

KINGS OF FRANCE,

OF THE

RACE OF VALOIS.

INTERSPERSED WITH INTERESTING ANECDOTES.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A TOUR

THROUGH THE WESTERN, SOUTHERN, AND INTERIOR PROVINCES OF FRANCE,

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

By NATH.L WRAXALL, Jun.r Esq;

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF THE

KINGS OF FRANCE, &c.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

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Siege of Rouen. — Death of the king of Navarre. — Circumſtances of it. — Battle of Dreux. — Conſequences. — Siege of Orleans. — Aſſaſſination of the duke of Guiſe. — Minute recapitulation of the circumſtances. — His funerals. — Character. — Peace concluded. — Death of La Cipierre. — Character of the marechal de Retz. — Prince of Condé's amours, and ſecond marriage. — Charles attains to majority. — Adminiſtration of Catherine. — Interview of Bayonne. Commencement of the ſecond civil war. — Ineffectual enterprize of Meaux. — Battle of St. Denis. — Death of the conſtable de Montmorenci. — Circumſtances. — Character of the young king. — Second pacification.

THE circumſtances in which Charles the ninth ſucceeded to the crown, were ſuch as ſeemed but too indicative and prophetic of the future tempeſts which agitated and ſhook his throne. Scarce do the annals of any nation preſent us a reign ſo thick ſtrewn with events of the

moſt calamitous nature. Religion, a ſacred name, but proſtituted and abuſed to the purpoſes of intereſt or policy, ſerved as an oſtenſible pretext to cover the ambition, and other cauſes, which conduced to involve the unhappy kingdom in all the horrors of civil war.—An hiſtorian of ſenſibility cannot relate theſe diſaſtrous facts, without tears of commiſeration and diſtreſs. Battles ſucceed to battles in ſad diſplay. That inveterate animoſity, that cruel and ſanguinary ſpirit, which ever mingles in, and characteriſes theological diſputes, actuated and inflamed the whole community.—The dreadful night of St. Bartholomew, ſtained with blood, and veiled in darkneſs, completes the mournful picture. It is a tale of woe almoſt unparalleled, and to which I early beſpeak the reader's attention and compaſſion.

The young king, Charles the ninth, who aſcended the throne in this critical and perilous juncture, was of an age too unripe and tender to interfere perſonally in the adminiſtration of affairs; and could

not, during many years, extend any effectual or permanent ſuccour to the accumulated evils of the ſtate.—Catherine, only anxious to lengthen the term of her ſon's minority, and her own regency, engroſſed with projects for the enlargement and prolongation of that authority with which ſhe was inveſted, ſowed diviſion and diſcord among the nobles. Ever oppoſing, with Italian refinement, one party to another—negligent of the public tranquillity, and ſolely attentive to her private aggrandiſement—ſhe ſacrificed every conſideration to her luſt of power. The feelings of a parent, the ties which bound her to her own offspring, could interpoſe no barrier to this tyrannic paſſion; and Charles, from the moment that he conceived the deſire of reigning without her aid, was regarded by her as the moſt inveterate enemy. As yet, ſhe had not this event to dread. Francis the ſecond's premature end placed her in the firſt poſt of government.—The ſtates, aſſembled at Orleans, were opened by the chancellor

with

with a mild harangue, breathing toleration, animated by patriotiſm, and exhorting to unanimity, and an oblivion of paſt diſſentions. Counſels the moſt glorious and ſalutary, but unhappily impracticable amid the furious zeal of contending parties!

Some attempts were made to deprive the queen-mother of the regency, which ſhe had aſſumed by a ſort of political violence; but Anthony's weakneſs, and her own addreſs, over-ruled and extinguiſhed thoſe ſymptoms of oppoſition. She then prorogued the aſſembly, the deliberations of which, ſhe feared, might tend to invalidate or diminiſh the regal prerogatives.

The court having retired to Fontainbleau, Louis prince of Condé repaired thither with a ſlender train.—Deſirous to juſtify himſelf from the treaſonable imputations caſt upon him in the late reign, he demanded permiſſion to prove his innocence before the king. It was granted him. The chancellor pronounced him

guiltleſs of the crimes laid to his charge, and he was re-admitted to take his ſeat in council.

Undepreſſed by the elevation of their enemies, and the unexpected reverſe of fortune which had befallen them, the princes of Lorrain kept their ground, without diſmay. Supporting, and ſupported by the ancient religion, they yet preſerved a prodigious influence, and ſpread terror among their opponents. In vain did the king of Navarre, though inveſted with the title of lieutenant-general, though aided by the conſtable and the Colignis, attempt to humble, and compel the duke of Guiſe to relinquiſh a part of his authority, as grand maſter of the houſhold. He was himſelf reduced, after an ineffectual and impotent ſtruggle, to renounce his pretenſions.

Alarmed at ſo powerful a combination between the princes of the blood, Montmorenci, and his nephews, the regent exerted herſelf to diſſolve a confederacy, which ſhe feared might affix limits to her own con-

conſequence. The conſtable heſitated long, uncertain and irreſolute. His eldeſt ſon, Francis de Montmorenci, eſteemed one of the wiſeſt lords of the kingdom, and cloſely connected with the Hugonot party, endeavoured to retain his father on their ſide; but d'Amville, his ſecond ſon, and Magdalen of Savoy, his wife, were of the oppoſite faction. Catherine, regardleſs what engines ſhe made ſubſervient to her meaſures, and anxious to ſucceed by any means, recalled Diana de Poitiers to court; and ordered her to try her powers of perſuading and winning the conſtable. She ſucceeded: he declared in favour of the Guiſes; and an union of policy and intereſts was eſtabliſhed between the duke, the marechal de St. André, and himſelf, which obtained the name of the Triumvirate *.

The

* This was the laſt public act of the celebrated ducheſs of Valentinois. She again retired, after this proof of her influence over Montmorenci, to the chateau of Anet. She ſurvived it about five years,

The ceremony of Charles's coronation, which theſe intrigues and diſputes had hitherto delayed, was at length performed with the accuſtomed magnificence. This ſpectacle of pageantry could not, in any degree, heal the wounds of the ſtate; and Catherine's perplexed mazes of conduct, which tended to ſow jealouſy and univerſal diſtruſt, encreaſed and irritated them. Fearful that ſhe might be oppreſſed by the ſuperior and irreſiſtible power of the three great united lords; and incapable of detaching them from their new bonds of coalition, ſhe attempted to balance their political weight, by others equally ſtrong. In conſequence of this determination, ſhe immediately made propoſals to the king of Navarre, for a more cloſe and intimate

and at length expired in the ſixty-ſeventh year of her age. Her tomb is yet to be ſeen at Anet. She was the moſt wondrous example of beauty and empire, preſerved even into the winter of life, which occurs in the hiſtory of time; unleſs Ninon de l'Enclos may be ſuppoſed to form an exception, and to have carried them to a yet more incredible length.

alliance between them. Anthony gladly embraced these offers; but while, in compliance with her promises to him, she affected to protect and favour the reformed religion, she secretly stimulated the constable to complain of those very innovations. Not sufficiently powerful to annihilate and compress by force the ministons parties, she substituted cunning and artifice in its stead; but her abilities, though great, and equal to almost every atchievement, yet fell short of this purpose. After having fomented the sparks of civil discord, she vainly flattered herself, she could extinguish them at pleasure, or divert their fury. They blazed to the destruction of her son, and the ruin of his kingdom.

A feigned reconciliation, and obliteration of injuries, took place about this time between the duke of Guise and prince of Condé: they embraced in the royal presence, and made professions of the most sincere and cordial amity. The king of Navarre, in the assembly of the states,

was

was again ſo weak as to renounce his claim to the regency. Catherine, who intimately knew the human heart; who ever addreſſed herſelf to its paſſions, and conquered, by flattering its propenſities; had enſlaved Anthony by a new allurement, peculiarly calculated to retain him in her fetters—I mean love and pleaſure. Mademoiſelle du Rouet, one of the moſt beautiful maids of honour in her train, ſerved as an inſtrument to faſcinate and lull aſleep the unhappy prince; and her aſcendency over a temper yielding, voluptuous, and indolent, was only extinguiſhed with his life.

The ſtates were opened with great ſolemnity. Charles, ſitting on his throne, with the queen, and his ſiſter the princeſs Margaret, on his left hand, was preſent at the debates. As the admiral Coligni had been principally and eminently inſtrumental to induce the king of Navarre not to conteſt the regent's power, ſhe in return avowedly patroniſed the Calviniſtical doctrines and followers. This pretended

partiality,

partiality, the result of no conviction, but originating from the most profound political hypocrisy, was equally displayed at the colloquy of Poissy; a vain attempt to reconcile the religious differences; and in which the cardinal of Lorrain on one side, and Theodore Beza on the other, declaimed with warmth and eloquence, to defend their respective tenets.

Disgusted at the loss of their credit, resenting the preference shewn to the Hugonots, and covering their dissatisfaction at Catherine's conduct under the pretext of attachment to religion, the triumvirate quitted the court. Still, however, attentive to their great political interests, they exerted every seductive and flattering artifice, which might win the king of Navarre, and bring him over to their party.—The Guises first proposed to him, the divorce of his wife Jane d'Albret, and his marriage with the young queen dowager, their niece. Finding he disapproved this offer, they pretended to have received promises from Philip the second,

of

of ceding to him Sardinia, in compenſation for the kingdom of Navarre. Anthony, deceived by this ideal advantage, united himſelf to his natural enemies, and became the dupe of their artifices, in contradiction to his honour and real intereſts *.

The

* It is to Davila alone we can have recourſe, amid this chaos of oppoſite and continually ſhifting meaſures, for any clear or certain explication of the ſources, from which ſprung the different actions related.—According to that great hiſtorian, who appears to have traced and pervaded, beyond any other, the ſilent and concealed workings of the heart, Anthony's change of conduct is not to be attributed, in any degree, either to religious or patriotic motives. Intereſt, ambition, and rivalſhip, were his ſole directing principles. Indolence, and a pacific temper corroborated, and added ſtrength to theſe. His partiality to the Calviniſtical tenets had been ſhaken at the colloquy of Poiſſy, from the little agreement or harmony he found in the miniſters of that perſuaſion, on the articles of belief, and reaſons of diſſenſion from the Romiſh church. He was offended with the behaviour of the admiral, who affected, and attempted to govern him in every particular. But above all, he was ſtung with the ſuperiority and preference of his brother,

The voluntary retreat of the triumvirate had left Coligni undiſputed maſter of the field. Catherine iſſued a new edict, favourable to the Huguenots. She even affected to regulate her meaſures by his advice, and ſhewed him every mark of perfect confidence:—but theſe encouraging appearances were followed by the moſt dreadful convulſions. Condé and Coligni beheld the coming ſtorm. Wary and cautious, they already ſaw the queen's duplicity, and prepared to ward the dangers which menaced them. In the anticipation of theſe hoſtilities which they apprehended to be inevitable, they applied to the proteſtant princes of the

brother, among the Hugonots. The prince of Condé's open deteſtation of the Guiſes; his more impaſſioned courage and protection of them, had made him in reality the hero of their party. The king of Navarre's intereſts were likewiſe very different. He was the firſt prince of the blood, and might entertain no very diſtant or chimerical hopes of the crown. All theſe conjoined reaſons account for his confederacy with the Guiſes.

Germanic

Germanic empire, and received aſſurances of ſupport.

Meanwhile the duke of Guiſe, at the preſſing inſtances of his friends, ſet out on his return to court. A fatal accident which happened on the way, accelerated the rupture between the two factions, and began the bloody quarrel. While he ſtopt at the little town of Vaſſy in Champagne, and was employed in hearing maſs, a crowd of Calviniſts, aſſembled in a barn, interrupted and diſturbed his devotions by their hymns. Some quarrel ariſing among the duke's domeſtics and the Hugonots, he ran eagerly himſelf to prevent it. In this attempt he received a blow upon the cheek with a ſtone: his attendants ſeeing his face all bloody, drew their ſwords, and killed above fifty, beſides two hundred who were wounded in the fray *.

The

* If we may credit Davila, the duke of Guiſe was guiltleſs of any intention to injure or moleſt the Hugonots, while occupied in an act of their religion.

He

The prince of Condé immediately waited on the young king at the palace of Monceaux, to demand juſtice and reparation for the maſſacre. Catherine, diſtreſſed at this peremptory requiſition, promiſed ample ſatisfaction to the prince. She iſſued an order to the king of Navarre, commanding him to provide for the ſafety of her ſon and the kingdom; enjoined the duke of Guiſe to repair inſtantly to her, unattended; and the marechal de St. André to ſet out with-

He ſays expreſsly, that theſe latter firſt commenced the diſpute, by throwing ſtones at his attendants, who had rode up to the ſpot from motives of curioſity. The duke was exerting every effort to quell the diſturbance ariſen, when he was hurt on the cheek. This inſult to their lord, irritated his followers to fury, and produced the maſſacre. When it was paſt, he ſummoned the magiſtrate of the place into his preſence, and ſeverely reprimanded him for permitting theſe licentious and illegal aſſemblies of the people. On his attempting to juſtify himſelf, by pleading the royal edict in favour of the Calviniſts, the duke laid his hand on his ſword, and replied angrily, "This ſhall ſoon cut the bond of that edict, "though never ſo ſtrong."

out

out delay for his government of Lyons. None of the three obeyed her mandate. Anthony repulsed the Hugonot deputies with threats, who were sent to lay before him their complaints: the duke replied, that he had no leisure to come yet to court, being otherwise employed: and St. André, more insolent, informed her majesty to her face, that in the critical situation of affairs, he could not abandon the person of his sovereign.

The duke of Guise arrived soon after at Paris, attended by twelve hundred horse. Terrified by his approach, and dreading lest he should, in conjunction with the other confederates, deprive her of the supreme management of affairs, the queen embraced a step the most pernicious, and replete with future miseries. She wrote to the prince of Condé, who had retired to his house, recommending to him, in terms so touching and pathetic, herself, the kingdom, and her son—adding, that the combined nobles held her in captivity—that she gave him a pre-

tence

tence the moſt plauſible and juſt to arm his aſſociates.—He availed himſelf of theſe letters to excuſe his proceedings; but being as yet too feeble to oppoſe enemies ſo numerous and powerful, he withdrew a ſecond time to his ſeat of La Fertè-Aucou, near Meaux.

The queen, meanwhile, accompanied by the chancellor, had carried the king to Fontainbleau. She beheld the awful picture of a civil war in full view. Her own ambiguous and intereſted policy, directed only to preſerve the authority of regent, had greatly conduced to haſten and inflame this cruel ſcourge. She would yet moſt willingly have averted ſo deplorable a calamity. Her own intereſts made her wiſh to prevent the effuſion of blood; and conſcious, that her junction with either party muſt be the ſignal of rebellion and hoſtility the moſt undiſguiſed, ſhe anxiouſly hoped to remain neuter, and hold the balance,—It was too late.—The duke of Guiſe, with a prodigious train, arrived at Fon-

tainbleau. — Catherine again ſummoned the prince of Condé ſecretly to her aſſiſtance.—She vainly flattered herſelf that his preſence would reſtore her to freedom, and render her the common arbitreſs;—but the evil genius of France had decreed otherwiſe: all her machinations became abortive.

The prince appeared immediately in arms, and paſſed the Seine at St. Cloud, in his way to join her.—Though his forces were too few to terrify the confederates, they ſeized on the occaſion to render themſelves maſters of the king's perſon, which they pretended was neceſſary, to prevent his falling into the hands of the Hugonots. The king of Navarre brought her this melancholy intelligence. Catherine heſitated: Anthony informed her, that he was come to conduct his ſovereign to Paris, where he would be in ſafety; and added, with a ſort of brutality, that "if "ſhe did not chuſe to accompany him, "ſhe might remain alone." He even allowed her no time to deliberate upon this

this important and definitive ſtep. Charles, too young to oppoſe the violence offered him, turned towards his mother, as if to know her ſentiments: ſhe dared not utter a word; and the young king, burſting into tears of impotent reſentment and indignation, ſuffered himſelf to be conducted weeping to Melun, and thence to the capital.

No alternative, except open war, remained to the prince of Condé. Deceived, as he apprehended, by the queen, and his enemies in poſſeſſion of the royal perſon, he deemed it too late to retract, or ſuſpend his enterprize *.—Galloping therefore

* He was only at a ſmall diſtance from the court, when intimation arrived of the Catholics having carried Charles to Paris. Stunned by this intelligence, the prince checked his horſe, and remained a conſiderable time motionleſs, and ſilent. He perceived the critical ſituation in which he ſtood. All the troubles and diſaſters of the future war roſe before his imagination. He had not yet paſſed the Rubicon.——While he revolved in his mind theſe conſiderations, Coligni, who had been behind, overtook

therefore with the utmoſt expedition to Orleans, accompanied by two thouſand cavalry, he rendered himſelf maſter of the city, after a vigorous oppoſition.

Conſcious that the meaſure he had embraced was deciſive and irretrievable, he proceeded to enact regulations of military and civil ſubjection to his followers. As in war only his future ſafety could be found, he neglected no precautions of a general, to enſure ſucceſs. He was proclaimed chief of the party by unanimous conſent. The pretext for their having taken up arms, was declared to be, the releaſe of the king and his mother, from the captivity in which they were held by the triumvirate; and he immediately

took him. They conferred together ſome minutes. At length, the prince ſeemed to have taken his ultimate reſolution; and, after a deep ſigh, exclaimed, "Affairs are arrived at that paſs, that it "is neceſſary we drink, or be drowned!" So ſaying, he proceeded inſtantly towards Orleans.—It is Davila who relates theſe intereſting particulars of the commencement of the civil war.

diſpatched

diſpatched meſſengers to the German princes, requeſting their aid in the great cauſe of religion.

This conduct was the ſignal of revolt and ſedition throughout the whole kingdom. The Hugonots, animated by their leader's example, expelled in many places the Catholics; but their frantic and ungovernable zeal carried them to exceſſes the moſt horrible and ſanguinary. With the frenzy characteriſtic of new and oppreſſed ſects, they reſpected no edifices or profeſſions, however ſacred. With a brutal and ferocious rage, they exerted their vengeance even on inanimate and lifeleſs objects. The prince of Condé attempted to reſtrain theſe licentious practices, but in vain; he was neither heard or obeyed, amid the fury of religious animoſity and antipathy.

The chancellor de l'Hopital, who alone, in this tumultuous and melancholy period, preſerved a ſteady and equal temper, yet labour'd to avert the tempeſt. He beheld France ready to be plunged in a

war, heightened by every circumſtance of inveterate hatred. He hung over his bleeding country with a parent's and a patriot's ſenſations.—He prevailed on the queen to exert her endeavours for an accommodation. Catherine wiſhed it with equal ardour, though from motives of a far inferior nature. She ſaw the prince of Condé already in poſſeſſion of half the kingdom; ſhe dreaded leſt the confederates ſhould imitate the precedent, and the king be finally left, between the two factions, without places, revenue, or dominions.

Stimulated by conſiderations ſo forcible to an ambitious mind, ſhe undertook the arduous taſk. Not diſcouraged by ill ſucceſs, and conſcious of her own talents in negotiation, ſhe made repeated and maſterly eſſays to detach the prince of Condé from his party. More than once, her addreſs and perſuaſions had nearly proved victorious. She allured him by propoſals the moſt ſeductive; promiſed that the triumvirate ſhould quit the court,

and

and a general freedom of religious ſentiment and worſhip be granted to his followers. Acting in perſon, and not thro' the medium of delegates; miſtreſs of all the winning arts which faſcinate and enſlave the human mind; ever attacking the heart and its favourite propenſities, ſhe at length engaged him to give his word, that he would quit the kingdom, if his enemies conſented to renounce the adminiſtration. The triumvirs, from whom ſhe had previouſly obtained the ſame promiſe, inſtantly performed it, and retired to Chateau-Dun. Catherine ſummoned the prince to the obſervance of his agreement; he affected to obey; and an interview took place between them at Talſy, only ſix miles diſtant from either camp; where Condé made his feigned ſubmiſſions to Charles and the queen. But Coligni, who repoſed no confidence in her honour, and beheld the Hugonots in the moſt extreme peril, if their chieftain abandoned them, broke, by his remonſtrances and repreſentations, this treaty, on

the point of accomplishment, and led him back to his expecting partizans.

War, long protracted and suspended, now began in all its fury. The royal army, in which was the queen and her son, after having taken Blois, Tours, and Bourges, laid siege to Rouen. Montgomeri, whose fatal rencontre with Henry the second, has rendered him so famous in the annals of France, commanded in it, and made a most vigorous defence. A composition was offered him repeatedly, which he refused. Three times the queen, by the chancellor's entreaties, prevented the duke of Guise from storming the place; but as the besieged rejected obstinately every proposal of an accommodation, it was at length permitted *. The city

* Among the many great qualities which Catherine of Medecis possessed, and which are rarely found in women, was her courage. It approached to the noblest heroism. At the siege of Rouen, she went every day to the fort St. Catherine, where the most bloody attacks were made. The duke of Guise and the constable remonstrating with her on the danger to which

city was carried by aſſault; and the ſack laſted two days without remiſſion. Montgomeri, with a few deſperate attendants, and a party of Engliſh whom Elizabeth had ſent to his aid, eſcaped in a boat upon the Seine, and broke the chains ſtretched acroſs the river at Caudebec.

Anthony king of Navarre found his death at this ſiege: he was wounded in the trenches, with a harquebuſſe, in the ſhoulder, on the day intended for the aſſault. His emulation with the duke of Guiſe, and his own courage, carried him ever into the moſt dangerous ſituations. When the city was taken, he cauſed himſelf to be carried by his Switzers through the breach, in a litter. The wound in itſelf was not mortal; but his attachment to mademoiſelle du Rouet, and the plea-

which ſhe expoſed her perſon, "Why," anſwered ſhe, "ſhould I ſpare myſelf more than you? Is it that I "have leſs intereſt, or leſs courage? True, I have "not your force, but I have equal reſolution!"— What grandeur of ſentiment, had it been guided by principles of virtue! The ſoldiery gave her the title of "Mater Caſtrorum," in imitation of the Romans.

ſures

ſures in which he imprudently indulged himſelf with this beloved miſtreſs, threw his blood into a violent agitation, and produced a fever. The uneaſineſs of his mind inducing him to embark upon the Seine, for St. Maur, near Paris, he was ſeized with a ſhivering and cold ſweats, which announced his approaching end. The boat in which he had embarked ſtopping at Andely, he ſoon after breathed his laſt.—That irreſolution which diſtinguiſhed him through life, equally accompanied him in death. He received the ſacrament after the Roman Catholic communion; but his expiring profeſſions evinced his attachment to the reformed religion. He ordered thoſe who were around his bed, to carry his ſtricteſt injunctions to Jane queen of Navarre, on no account to truſt either herſelf or her children at court; to be ever upon her guard; and to fortify her places *.

While

* Davila's account of Anthony's wound, and the circumſtances of his deceaſe, is ſomewhat different from that

While ſucceſs attended on the royal troops before Rouen, the miſerable kingdom

that of moſt other hiſtorians.—"He had gone out to re-
"connoitre the breach, when he received a muſket-ball
"in his ſhoulder; which breaking the bone, and tear-
"ing the nerves, he dropped down upon the ſpot as
"dead.—This accident obliged the commanders to de-
"lay the aſſault. The ſoldiers and attendants bore him
"to his tent, and the ſurgeons immediately dreſſed his
"wound, in preſence of the young king, his mother,
"and all the generals. It was their unanimous opi-
"nion, that he could not live, on account of the
"prodigious ſize of the orifice, and the depth the
"ball had entered." He makes no mention of ma-demoiſelle du Rouet; but ſays, "That the king of
"Navarre, not being able to ſupport the extreme and
"violent pain he underwent, was reſolute, notwith-
"ſtanding the remonſtrances and entreaties of his
"phyſicians, to go up the Seine to St. Maur, whither
"he was accuſtomed frequently to retire, on account
"of the purity and ſalubrity of the air. His brother
"the cardinal of Bourbon, the prince of La Roche-
"ſur-Yonne, Louis Gonzaga, and ſeveral other per-
"ſons Catholic and Hugonot, accompanied him.
"He was ſcarcely arrived at Andely, when his fever,
"which the motion of his journey had irritated, en-
"creaſing, he became delirious, and ſoon after ex-
"pired."—Davila mentions his unfixed and varying religious belief, even in the article of death. He ever

ſpeaks

dom became a ſcene of deſolation, rapine, and blood through all her provinces;

ſpeaks of him in terms of approval, mixed with compaſſion; and ſays, that he was not calculated for the tempeſtuous ſcenes in which he was compelled to act a part. His candour, ſincerity, and gentleneſs, were ill adapted to the univerſal diſſimulation and fury, which characteriſed his aſſociates in power. He adds, that his death happened at a time, when experience had ſo ripened and matured his judgment, that it would probably have produced events widely different from the ideas preconceived of him.

Brantome ſays, he was of a fine ſtature, and much ſuperior, in perſonal dignity or appearance, to any other of the Bourbon race. He confirms his uncertainty and fluctuation between the two religions.—His two phyſicians were of different religious perſuaſions, and each endeavoured to influence the dying prince's mind and conduct. In compliance with the exhortations of the firſt, he received the Viaticum, and confeſſed himſelf at Rouen, in preſence of the prince of La Roche-ſur-Yonne. The queen coming to viſit him, and adviſing him to hear ſome pious book read, he liſtened with great attention to the book of Job, which his Calviniſt phyſician had brought. His name was Raphael Felliori; and this man reproaching him with indifference for his tenets, Anthony aſſured him, that if he recovered, he would publicly embrace the profeſſion of Lutheraniſm.—He died at forty-two years of age.

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The contending parties, inflamed with civil and religious rage, were equally guilty of the moſt barbarous exceſſes. A minute recapitulation of theſe calamities would preſent a picture too humiliating to human nature, too affecting and horrible to a boſom of humanity. I ſuppreſs the painful narration. I draw a veil over this frightful proſpect, where diſcord and death appear predominant, and ſhall return to the great actors we have left.

Louis prince of Condé at length took the field, with twelve thouſand ſoldiers. He had determined, in contradiction to the advice of Coligni and d'Andelot, to march direct to Paris; expecting that the conſternation he ſhould ſtrike into the inhabitants and the queen, would reduce them to terms of accommodation. In this hope he found himſelf deceived. Catherine, ſkilled in the ſubtleties of delay and of negotiation, engaged him in repeated and fruitleſs conferences, only calculated to give the Pariſians time to recover the

the panic into which his ſudden appearance had thrown them. While ſhe tendered him fraudulent and deceptive conditions of peace, ſhe ſeduced his braveſt captains, and prevailed on them to quit his cauſe.—Condé, convinced how futile and dangerous were all the regent's offers, after ſeveral vain attempts upon the capital, decamped, and began his march into Normandy. The triumvirs followed cloſe upon his ſteps; and, having come up with him by ſurprize near Dreux, an engagement became unavoidable.

The Hugonots had in the beginning the whole advantage. The impetuoſity of their charge bore down all oppoſition. The conſtable, wounded in the face with a piſtol-ball, and his horſe falling under him, was taken priſoner; a part of their cannon was ſeized; and the rout appeared univerſal.—But the duke of Guiſe, cool and unmoved, had not yet engaged. He looked on at the battle with the moſt ſerene compoſure, and watched the moment to retrieve it. Though never poſſeſſed of any military rank higher than a captain of gen

d'armes, his great and diſtinguiſhed capacity rendered him more reſpected than the firſt commanders of the age. Seeing the Hugonot ſoldiery diſperſed, and already engaged in plunder, he fell upon them, and put them inſtantly to flight. The prince of Condé, who diſdained to turn his back, and was ever found in the front of danger, was ſurrounded, and made priſoner by d'Amville, the conſtable's ſecond ſon, after having been wounded in the right hand. Coligni rallied his forces, and retired precipitately, under cover of the evening. He would have returned to the combat the enſuing day, but his German auxiliaries refuſed. He retreated therefore towards Orleans, unpurſued by the Royaliſts, and carring with him his captive Montmorenci.

The field of battle, and the whole glory of the day, remained undiſputed to the duke of Guiſe. But if his maſterly conduct in the action gained him the applauſes of the court and adoration of the troops, his behaviour to the prince of Condé

Condé covered him with immortal honour. He received him with the moſt courteous politeneſs, lodged him in his own tent, and divided with him his bed. The prince himſelf afterwards declared, that during the whole night he could not cloſe his eyes, while the duke enjoyed the ſoundeſt ſleep by his ſide *.—In this engagement fell

* The moſt exact detail of this celebrated engagement is to be found in Davila. The prince of Condé's negligence, chiefly involved the Hugonots in the neceſſity of fighting; the conſtable having taken advantage of his ſecurity, and want of precaution, to paſs his whole army over the river Eure by moon-light, the preceding night. Coligni firſt diſcovered this error and its conſequences, of which he ſent immediate information to the prince. Condé might yet have avoided a deciſive action; but his great ſpirit would not permit him to retreat before the Catholics.—The admiral fought with dauntleſs reſolution; and with his own hand laid dead upon the ground Gabriel de Montmorenci fourth ſon to the conſtable, and the count de Rochefort.—The Switzers alone remained firm and immoveable.—Davila attributes the whole merit of the victory, very deſervedly, to the duke of Guiſe.—D'Andelot, one of the moſt intrepid chieftains

fell the marechal de St. André, one of the triumvirate *.

During the commencement of the attack, as the advantage was totally on the prince of Condé's ſide, numbers of runaways fled even to Paris, and publiſhed that all was loſt. The ducheſs of Guiſe, who was uſually attended by a prodigious

in the Hugonot army, had been neceſſitated to retire early out of the combat, by a quartan ague, which incapacitated him for any exertion of military ſkill or proweſs.—The prince of Condé, all covered with ſweat and blood, was conducted by d'Amville to the duke of Guiſe's tent. Theſe are ſome of the moſt intereſting facts of the battle of Dreux.

* He was a polite and gallant nobleman, much regretted by his party. Brantome gives the minuteſt particulars of his death. The battle was already gained, ſays he, when intelligence arrived, that a body of 500 Hugonot cavalry had rallied, and prepared to renew the attack. St. André was mounted on a horſe, which ſpent with fatigue, tumbled down in the onſet, and had not ſtrength to riſe. At that moment, a gentleman on the oppoſite ſide, named Aubigné, whoſe eſtate the marechal enjoyed by confiſcation, came up, and diſcharged a piſtol-ball through his head, which inſtantly killed him. His body was not found till the enſuing morning, in a ditch near the ſpot where he fell.

crowd of courtiers and votaries, remained almoſt alone. The queen's mother, prepared for every event, careleſs of the fate of religion, and viewing every object through the medium of policy and intereſt, received the news with extreme compoſure, and only ſaid "Eh bien! il faudra donc prier Dieu en François!"—It was to her indifferent whether Condé or Guiſe ultimately prevailed; whether the Catholic, or the Calviniſtical doctrines gained the pre-eminence. When the ſucceeding day corrected the error, and brought certain intelligence of the victory, ſhe from the ſame principles, was concerned and mortified. Her diſcernment made her foreſee, that it eſtabliſhed the duke of Guiſe's authority, and reduced her to a more compleat ſubjection. She notwithſtanding endeavoured to conceal her feelings; ordered fires to be lighted for the defeat of the Hugonots, and conferred upon the duke the ſupreme command of the army, with which his troops had already inveſted him.

Coligni meanwhile, on whom his army

had likewiſe conferred the poſt of general, paſſed the Loire at Beaugency; and having left his brother d'Andelot in Orleans with two thouſand men, in expectation of its being inveſted by the royaliſts, marched into Normandy, where he might receive the queen of England's promiſed ſupplies of money and auxiliaries. The admiral's precautions were juſtly founded. Notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the winter, and the ſtrength of the city, the duke of Guiſe determined to commence the ſiege. The queen accompanied him, carrying with her the prince of Condé, who was ſhut up in the caſtle of Onzain.—Though d'Andelot, one of the moſt gallant and experienced captains of his age, animated by the important charge confided to his care, exerted every effort of courage and military ſkill to defend the place; yet the ſuperior genius and conduct of the duke had already rendered him maſter of the bridge and ſuburbs: nor can there be any doubt that Orleans muſt have ſurrendered in a few weeks, if the fatal accident of

his murder had not ſnatched the Hugonots from the imminent and unavoidable danger.

A gentleman of Angoumois, named John Poltrot de Meré, was the author of this deteſtable aſſaſſination. He was of the Reformed religion, which he had pretended to renounce; and the duke had received him with his accuſtomed courteſy and liberality of ſpirit. Poltrot had long watched the favourable opportunity to give the blow. The duke of Guiſe uſed to go every day in perſon to viſit the works, and inſpect the advances made. As he returned in the evening, without his armour, only attended by one gentleman, and mounted on horſeback, the aſſaſſin, who waited for him, diſcharged three balls into his left ſhoulder. Every medical aſſiſtance was procured; but he expired at the end of eight days *.

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* Davila is not very diffuſe in his account of the duke's death. He ſays, the balls paſſed through his body, and that he died on the *third* day: but Brantome,

The regent, fearful lest he should be suspected as instrumental or privy to his death,

tome, who served under the duke of Guise, and was at the siege of Orleans, has given the most minute enumeration of the circumstances of it. On the evening when he was killed, says he, only monsieur de Rostain accompanied him. He had just passed the river in a little boat, which constantly waited for that purpose. Poltrot immediately fled on discharging his pistol; and affecting to be a pursuer of the assassin, cried out, "Take him! take him!"—The duke perceiving himself dangerously wounded, only said, "L'on me devoit celle-la; mais je crois que "ce ne sera rien." They carried him to his own quarters.

Brantome, though devotedly attached to the house of Guise, yet does not absolutely accuse the admiral as the author, or concealed perpetrator of his death. He only drops ambiguous intimations, that he knew Poltrot's designs, without exposing himself to the infamy of a discovery, in case of his seizure. He however pretends, that the duke himself suspected Coligni, and pardoned him when expiring.—Davila says, that the admiral and Theodore Beza were universally believed to have persuaded Poltrot to commit this crime. They constantly denied the charge, and dispersed long justifications of their innocence over all Europe: but it did not erase, or obliterate the

death, cauſed herſelf to be interrogated in his chamber, before his own family, and a number of the nobility. Poltrot had endeavoured to ſecure himſelf by flight; but after having wandered the whole night in the woods, on horſeback, he found himſelf in the morning at the bridge of Olivet, only a league from Orleans. Spent with fatigue, he entered a houſe with intent to repoſe himſelf, and was there taken by one of the duke's ſecretaries.

When queſtioned with reſpect to the motives that had urged him to the perpetration of ſo foul and daſtardly a crime,

apprehenſion of their guilt from the minds of the Catholics, and the houſe of Guiſe.

I cannot quit the ſubject of Francis duke of Guiſe, without mentioning a circumſtance of him, that marks the trueſt magnanimity, clemency, and patriotiſm—When previous to the ſtorm of the breach at Rouen, he harangued his ſoldiery, and put himſelf at their head, he ardently recommended to them three things—to reſpect the chaſtity and honour of the women—to ſpare the lives of every Catholic without diſtinction—and, to ſhew no mercy, or quarter to the Engliſh auxiliaries, their ancient and inveterate enemies.

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he declared it to be religious zeal. As to the inſtigators of it, he accuſed ſeveral, but without uniformity; among others the admiral. Coligni highly reſented and denied the imputation, which muſt ſtigmatize him with indelible infamy to his own adherents, and to the lateſt poſterity. He demanded of the queen, that the criminal's puniſhment ſhould be delayed till they could be perſonally confronted. Theſe juſtifications and ſolemn proteſtations did not, however, convince the family of Guiſe of his innocence. Henry, ſon to the expiring duke, and then in very early youth, vowed an immortal hatred, and imprecated vengeance on the admiral's head, as his father's murderer. He ſatiated this unrelenting deſire of revenge many years after.

The duke of Guiſe, conſcious that his end approached, prepared himſelf for it, as became a hero. That magnanimous and exalted intrepidity, that mild and equal ſerenity of temper, which had ſhone eminently in his life, was equally viſible in

his dying moments. Mindful of his honour, and desirous to clear his conduct from the aspersions cast upon it, he vindicated himself from any intention to commit the massacre of Vassy; and lamented in terms the most pathetic, that unhappy event, which had lighted up the destructive flame of civil discord. With earnest entreaties, he implored the queen, as the common mother of her people, to terminate the quartels which desolated France; and pronounced the man an enemy to his country and his sovereign, who should offer her any other counsel.

The funeral honours paid him after death, were scarce less than royal. They are equalled by nothing in the French annals, except those which Turenne received a century afterwards. His body was carried in melancholy pomp to the Chartreux at Paris, and thence to "Notre-Dame," where he lay in state. Immense crowds of weeping citizens followed the procession. He was ultimately deposited with his ancestors at Joinville.

Poltrot

Poltrot was adjudged by the parliament to suffer the same punishment inflicted on traitors or regicides, and was torn in pieces by wild horses. At his execution, it is said, he still accused the admiral, as privy to the commission of the crime: and though the whole tenour of Coligni's life and conduct seem to combat and refute this horrible imputation; though a candid and impartial mind must refuse to admit so invalid a testimony, yet we know what degrading and unnatural violations of honour, rectitude, and justice, the spirit of religious zeal, however glorious or laudable, when irritated by persecution, can induce us to commit.

Francis duke of Guise appears to have been one of the greatest characters of the age in which he flourished, whether regarded as a warrior or a statesman. His errors, his vices and faults were even more the result of situation than of sentiment: and his towering ambition, though not justified, is yet palliated and diminished by the sublime qualities he possessed.

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from nature, and the peculiar circumſtances which gave ſcope and exertion to them. His death muſt certainly be conſidered as a misfortune to France; ſince he alone impoſed ſome limits to the reſtleſs and intriguing genius of Catherine, now freed from all conſtraint, and without a rival in authority.

The queen evinced her deference to the duke of Guiſe's advice, by the immediate overtures ſhe made of a pacification. It was ſoon concluded, by the mediation of the conſtable and prince of Condé, on terms not unfavourable to the Hugonots; though the admiral, on his arrival from Normandy, reproached the prince in very ſevere expreſſions for his haſty compliance, at a juncture when their great adverſary's death gave them reaſon to expect a reverſe of fortune.

Orleans was evacuated by the Calviniſt troops; and the ſeigneur de la Cipierre, one of the moſt accompliſhed, virtuous, and amiable lords in the kingdom, appointed governor of the city. He was already

ready in poſſeſſion of a poſt, perhaps the moſt arduous, important, and weighty, which could be entruſted to any ſubject; that of tutor and preceptor to the young king. No man was more calculated to execute its high duties. He endeavoured to inſtil the moſt elevated and glorious ſentiments into his royal pupil; and he would probably have inſpired Charles, who poſſeſſed lively parts and quick perception, with the love of virtue, and the feelings of a great monarch;—but his death, untimely, and before theſe noble ſeeds could ſink deep into Charles's boſom, deprived his country of ſo ineſtimable a treaſure. All the miſeries of this unhappy reign, all the dreadful crimes which ſtain its bloody archives, are probably to be imputed to this lamented event.

Albert de Gondi, marechal de Retz, a Florentine, and devoted creature of Catherine, was placed by her in the charge which La Cipierre had occupied.—Deſtitute of principle, profligate and diſſolute in his manners, cruel from temper, diſſembling,

bling, and maſter of every little art of ſordid policy, he corrupted and perverted the many ſhining and ſublime qualities with which nature had liberally endowed the king. The wretched prince, educated in a ſchool of the moſt abandoned vice, and initiated into maxims of a tendency the moſt pernicious, was ruined while yet in early childhood; and all the expectations to which he had given birth, were defeated and rendered abortive.

During the tranquillity which ſucceeded to the late troubles of the ſtate, Catherine, with her uſual duplicity, endeavoured to ſow diſtruſt and jealouſy between the prince of Condé and Coligni. To the former ſhe tendered the ſame fallacious propoſals, which ſhe had uſed with ſo much ſucceſs to Anthony his brother: But Louis, more wiſe and penetrating, could not be dazzled or deceived by her offers; and ſhe vainly attempted to diſſolve the intimate connection which ſubſiſted between the admiral and himſelf.

The prince of Condé, gallant and amo-

rous,

nous, was more affailable on the ſide of love, than policy. No nobleman of the court had received proofs ſo flattering of female attachment, or was more acceptable to women. Margaret de Luſtrac, widow of the marechal de St. André, long diſputed the poſſeſſion of his heart, with Iſabella de la Tour de Turenne, known under the name of "La Belle de Limeüil." Each of theſe contending rivals gave him the moſt romantic teſtimonies of their love. The firſt preſented him with her eſtate and caſtle of St. Valeri, magnificently furniſhed. The latter carried her paſſion yet farther—and ſacrificed to him her chaſtity and honour. She was even brought to bed in the queen's wardrobe: and Catherine, to whom ſhe was diſtantly allied, and to whom ſhe belonged as a maid of honour, ordered her to be conducted to a convent *.

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* Almoſt all the French writers have been very minute and circumſtantial in the relation of this ſingular ſtory. Even Davila did not deem it unworthy a recital.—"It was Catherine's grand ſyſtem of policy," ſays

The admiral, who was conſcious that theſe irregularities in the chief of his par-

ſays he, "at the termination of the firſt civil war, "to diſſolve the prince of Condé in diſſolute de- "lights, and all thoſe effeminate pleaſures which "might inſenſibly enervate his mind, and imperceptibly diminiſh the natural activity of his diſpoſition. She endeavoured, by honours and ample poſſeſſions, to give him a diſtaſte for the fatigues of a camp. To this end, ſhe prompted and encouraged the mareſchale de St. André, who inherited from her father and huſband prodigious riches, to attempt the prince's heart: but though he accepted her ſplendid preſent, he deſpiſed her perſon, and remained unaſſailable by all her benefits."—To mademoiſelle de Limeüil he was more deeply attached; and Davila makes no ſcruple to declare, that Catherine was not ignorant, though ſhe affected to be ſo, that he had obtained from her the laſt favours.—It is ſaid, his wife Eleanor de Roye died a martyr to her jealouſy and chagrin at her huſband's amours.—Mademoiſelle de Limeüil was married afterwards to Geoffry de Cauſac, ſeigneur de Fremon.

The prince of Condé's gallantries and libertiniſm gave occaſion to the following "Vaudeville," or ſatyrical ſonnet.

"Ce petit homme tant joly,
"Toujours cauſe, et toujours rit,
"Et toujours baiſe ſa mignonne:
"Dieu garde de mal le petit homme!"

ty,

ty, reflected a diſgrace on all its adherents, and who dreaded leſt ſome one of the prince's amours might prove too ſtrong for the leſs tender ties of ambition or religion; remonſtrated with him ſo forcibly, on the pernicious conſequences of his continual engagements and gallantries, that he prevailed on him to put an end to them by a ſecond marriage with Frances ſiſter to the duke of Longueville.

The Catholics and Hugonots, forgetting their inveterate animoſities, and animated by the love of their common country, joined to retake Havre-de-Grace from the Engliſh, to whom it had been ceded during the war. It was ſoon ſurrendered, and followed by a final accommodation between the crowns.

Catherine, who had long amuſed the prince of Condé, with promiſes of admitting him to a participation of the government, and who knew not how longer to exclude him, determined on a ſingular manœuvre. The chancellor de l'Hopital,

who

who had withdrawn from court during the league of the triumvirate, but whom the regent had again recalled, was the author and adviſer of it. The young king entered at this time into the fourteenth year of his age. By the famous edict of Charles the fifth, it was neceſſary that he ſhould have compleated the year, before he attained to majority: but as the queen, by the declaration of his being no longer a minor, knew that ſhe ſhould retain unmoleſted the ſupreme power in her ſon's name, ſhe procured it to be regiſtered in the parliament of Rouen. That of Paris refuſed to receive or confirm this act; but Charles, inſtructed by his mother, reproved them in terms, ſo peremptory and ſevere, for their audacious temerity, that after a conſiderable delay, it paſſed the aſſembly.

Magnificent in all her plans, the queen cauſed the palace of the Tournelles, in which her huſband Henry the ſecond had expired, to be demoliſhed; and erected in its place, the ſplendid one of the Tuille-

ries. She employed in its conſtruction the moſt celebrated architects of the age, and rewarded them as became a ſovereign, with the nobleſt liberality. All the branches of polite letters felt her patronage. Italy, her native country, was ranſacked to enrich and adorn that over which ſhe reigned. She prided herſelf on an imitation of, and unbounded reverence to the memory of Francis the firſt, in whoſe court ſhe had ſpent her early years. Elegant and luxurious in her taſte; refined and delicate in all her projects or enterprizes, beyond the genius of the century in which ſhe flouriſhed; Cathérine of Medecis forms one of the moſt wondrous and extraordinary characters, to be found in the annals of mankind.

The continual and inceſſant complaints made by each party, of the infringement of the peace, ſtrongly evinced its precarious duration, and feeble nature. The family of Guiſe loudly demanded juſtice againſt Coligni, as the ſuppoſed author of the late duke's aſſaſſination. A conteſt

between Francis de Montmorenci, the conſtable's eldeſt ſon, who was governor of Paris, and the cardinal of Lorrain, had nearly lighted up again the fatal brand of civil commotion throughout the kingdom.

The queen therefore, from motives not eaſily aſcertained, reſolved to carry her ſon on a progreſs through his dominions. It was ſuppoſed, that a principal inducement to this journey, was to form an eſtimate of the Hugonot forces and real ſtrength, by an exact inſpection in perſon. Henry duke of Anjou, Charles's eldeſt brother, and Margaret his ſiſter, afterwards queen of Navarre, accompanied their mother. After having viſited Sens, and Troyes in Champagne, they arrived, by the ſouthern provinces of France, at Bayonne. Here took place the celebrated interview between her and the queen of Spain, Iſabella her daughter. This latter princeſs was conducted by a ſplendid train, at the head of which was the duke of Alva, and the count de Benevento.

The

The duke of Anjou, with a number of the young nobility, paſſed the frontier, and met his ſiſter at Arnani, in Spaniſh Navarre. Catherine, from impatience to embrace her favourite and beloved daughter, croſſed the river Bidaſſoa, which ſeparates the two kingdoms. On the oppoſite ſide, Iſabella was met by the king himſelf, who gave her his hand to conduct her out of the boat.

The young queen was received with prodigious pomp at Bayonne. This interview laſted above three weeks. Every beautiful and brilliant entertainment, every gallant and noble diverſion, which Catherine's fertile genius and uncommon capacity could invent or aſſemble, was exhibited to teſtify her joy on this re-union, and to inſpire the Spaniards with the higheſt ideas of the magnificence of her court. Pleaſure ſeemed to engroſs all preſent, and to have baniſhed from this ſcene of feſtivity the more ferocious paſſions; but it was the queen's peculiar policy to cover her ſchemes of ambition or ven-

geance under the maſk of diſſipation. A gallery of wood, conſtructed to join the houſe in which ſhe reſided, with her daughter Iſabella's, ſerved to facilitate the ſecret conferences, which it is ſaid ſhe held with the duke of Alva, on the ſubject of reducing and extirpating the Hugonots. Some uncertain and ambiguous informations of this dreadful coalition and confederacy for their deſtruction, were circulated abroad. Catherine's character and conduct confirmed the ſuſpicion. Diſtruſt, mingled with terror and alarm, ſucceeded; nor could any careſſes of the king or court diſpel their apprehenſions. On Charles's return from this progreſs, which had laſted near two years, a conſtrained reconciliation, void of mutual forgiveneſs, took place between the admiral and the family of Guiſe; and was followed by another, not more ſincere, between the cardinal of Lorrain and the marechal de Montmorenci.

New ſources of war diſcloſed themſelves every day. The edicts of toleration and protection, repeatedly iſſued in favour

your of the Reformed religion, were violated in all the provinces with impunity. The government encouraged indirectly theſe proceedings, and extended no redreſs to the grievances of the Calviniſts. They carried their complaints of theſe infractions and oppreſſions to the admiral and prince; but it was long before either of the chiefs could be induced to reſume the ſword. The latter yet hoped to be conſtituted lieutenant-general of the kingdom, as the king of Navarre had been; and both peculiarly dreaded to impreſs their young ſovereign, now advancing faſt to manhood, with ſentiments unfavourable and hoſtile to them. They twice diſmiſſed the delegates ſent by their adherents; after having adviſed and enjoined them, rather to ſubmit to any indignities or perſecutions, than to have recourſe to ſo dreadful a remedy as rebellion, and a renewal of the calamities of which they had already been witneſſes; but the intimation which they ſoon afterwards received, that it was determined to

ſeize on them both; to retain the prince in perpetual priſon, and put Coligni to death; neceſſitated them to more deciſive and vigorous meaſures. D'Andelot, fearleſs and intrepid, counſelled inſtant war, the moſt open and declared. His remonſtrances prevailed; and it was reſolved to gain poſſeſſion of the king's perſon, which could be only effected by cutting the Swiſs guards in pieces, who attended on and protected him *.

This

* Brantome, who was certainly well informed in the court intrigues, declares the war to have been entirely cauſed by the prince of Condé's diſappointed ambition. He had long flattered himſelf with the lieutenancy of the kingdom: Catherine, unable longer to delude him with promiſes, tutored her favourite ſon Henry, and inſpired him with the deſire of filling this high office. At a ſupper in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prez, the young prince moſt ſeverely and haughtily reprimanded Condé for his audacity, in preſuming to emulate a poſt, which he had reſolved to poſſeſs himſelf. Brantome ſays he was preſent, and heard the converſation. Condé perceived from what hand the blow came: He ſaw all his expectations blaſted: He beheld himſelf duped by the queen, and ſought for revenge by unſheathing the ſword.

The

This enterprize was not difficult. Charles, with the queen his mother, was at the palace of Monceaux, where he held a grand chapter of the order of St. Michael. The Switzers, diſperſed in the ſurrounding villages, might have been ſeparately ſurprized, and put to the ſword: but Catherine having received intelligence of their

The writer of Louis duke of Montpenſier's life aſſerts the ſame fact, and Davila confirms it.

This laſt hiſtorian, with his uſual impartiality and diſcernment, has laid open, with prodigious exactitude, the many latent principles of internal diſcord which produced theſe ſecond civil broils. He accuſes the partizans of both religions with being principally acceſſory to it, by their reciprocal injuries, turbulence, and antipathy. He attributes it to the young king's high and unconcealed reſentment of the Hugonots' preſumption and encroaching ſpirit—to the prince of Condé's ambitious and reſtleſs temper, incapable of repoſe—to the terrors of the Calviniſts at the ſuppoſed ſchemes for their deſtruction planned at Bayonne—to Coligni and d'Andelot's haughty and unſubmitting temper—to Catherine's hypocriſy and dangerous diſſimulation—to the cardinal of Lorrain's counſels.—All theſe conjoined cauſes, acting on minds already inflamed with mutual animoſity, and incapable of being reſtrained or extinguiſhed, again involved the kingdom in new commotions.

approach, and ſuſpecting their intentions, retired haſtily with her ſon into the town of Meaux. She then diſpatched the marechal de Montmorenci with ſome deceptive propoſals, while the Switzers aſſembled for the king's defence.

A council was held, on the meaſures requiſite to be purſued in this critical dilemma. The conſtable, cautious, and provident of his royal maſter's ſafety, wiſhed not to expoſe him to the hazard of an uncertain combat. The chancellor, touched by the great and ſalutary conſiderations of the public tranquillity; and conſcious that the young king would be irritated to the higheſt degree by ſo audacious an attempt, which muſt infallibly produce a ſecond civil war more cruel and inveterate than the firſt, joined Montmorenci in adviſing to remain at Meaux. Unhappily for France, the cardinal of Lorrain oppoſed theſe lenient counſels, and prevailed. At the break of day Charles quitted the city, environ'd by the Switzers, in the centre of whom he was placed,

placed. Before they had advanced two leagues, the prince of Condé appeared in ſight with near five hundred horſe. The conſtable, dreading the ſhock of ſo determined a body, commanded by ſuch leaders; and rendered diſtruſtful by age, ſent the king forward with only two hundred cavalry by a private road, and he arrived ſafely at Paris the ſame evening. Condé, who was ignorant of this prudent ſtep, charged the Switzers repeatedly, but in vain. They ſuſtained the attack unmoved; and after having harraſſed them a conſiderable way, he retired *.

Ineffectual

* Davila's account of the enterprize of Meaux is ſomewhat different from that of Mezerai, and moſt of the other French hiſtorians.—He attributes the advice of marching to Paris, not to the cardinal of Lorrain, but the duke of Nemours. He adds, that the conſtable's opinion would notwithſtanding have prevailed, if Fifer, general of the Switzers, had not requeſted to be admitted to the young king's preſence, and aſſured his majeſty, that his troops would open him a paſſage through the enemy, with the point of their pikes, if he would entruſt his perſon to their pro-

Ineffectual conferences ſucceeded. Both parties, inflamed with animoſity, were incapable of liſtening to the mild voice of peace: and the Hugonots, though few in number, having attempted to block up and diſtreſs the capital, Montmorenci, though reluctant, yet compelled by the murmurs of the Pariſians, marched out to give them battle.—The prodigious inequality of numbers inſured him the victory; but the glory of the day remained to Condé and Coligni, who, with a hand-

protection.—This offer was embraced. The march began at day-break. Charles, the queen-mother, the foreign ambaſſadors, and all the ladies of the court, were received into the midſt of the Swiſs battalion. The count de la Rochefoucault, and Andelot, having joined the prince of Condé and admiral, they made a furious attack on the rear, but were received on the Swiſs pikes with wondrous intrepidity. The king gallantly ſpurred on his horſe to the foremoſt ranks, followed by all the noblemen who attended him. When he arrived ſafe in the capital, the Pariſians ſhed tears of joy. The whole merit of this action and eſcape was due to the bravery of the Switzers.

ful

ful of troops, could venture to face a royal army, ſo much ſuperior *.

The engagement was fought in the plains of St. Denis, and was rendered famous by the conſtable's death. He exerted, during the action, all the courage of a young ſoldier. Wounded in five places, he yet maintained his intrepidity. Robert Stuart, the ſame of whom I have already made mention, diſcharged a ball into his reins, which proved mortal.—

* The action, ſays Davila, began about noon. The ſuperiority of the Hugonots in cavalry, chiefly contributed to their ſucceſs in the commencement of it. The prince of Condé was oppoſed to the conſtable's diviſion, which he entirely routed. His horſe was killed under him; and he, with great difficulty, recovered another. Coligni commanded the van on that day; and being mounted on a fiery Turkiſh horſe, was once ſo much engaged among the enemy, that he narrowly eſcaped being taken priſoner. D'Andelot, who had been ſtationed on the other ſide the Seine, could not join his friends in time to be preſent at the battle.—The Hugonots took the advantage of a very dark and rainy evening to retreat; and the Catholics, though victorious, yet did not purſue them, on account of the loſs of their general.

Even

Even then, he had the vigour to drive the pommel of his ſword into Stuart's mouth, with which he beat out ſeveral of his teeth. His ſon, d'Amville, reſcued, and diſengaged him from the enemy. Fainting from loſs of blood, he ſunk down upon the ground; but the firſt uſe he made of his ſpeech, when recovered, was to demand if there yet remained enough day to purſue the Hugonots. It was long before he would permit himſelf to be carried off the field, on which he obſtinately reſolved to die.—"Tell the "king and queen," ſaid he, "that I ex-"pire with the higheſt pleaſure in the "diſcharge of the great duties I owe "them; and that I have at length found "that honourable end, which I have "ſought under their predeceſſors in ſo "many battles!"—Yielding to the importunate ſolicitations of his ſons and ſurrounding friends, he ſuffered himſelf to be brought to Paris. Charles and his mother viſited him, and wept his end. A cordelier tormenting him with admoni-

tions

tions and exhortations, he beſought him to ceaſe thoſe needleſs remonſtrances. "Doſt thou imagine," ſaid the conſtable, turning himſelf towards him with a ſerene countenance, "that I have lived to "near fourſcore years, without having "learned to die a quarter of an hour?"

In him expired the laſt remaining obſtacle to Catherine's authority. She ſaw herſelf delivered from every rival who could oppoſe or check her deſigns. She poſſeſſed an aſcendant the moſt unlimited over her ſon's mind: ſhe governed, tho' not inveſted with the vain title of regent. Though the conſtable had been uniformly unſucceſsful in war, and was the moſt unfortunate general of his age—though his bigotry, his ſeverity, and manners, diſguſting and imperious, render him little an object of love, or even of veneration—yet we cannot help dropping a tear on the aſhes of ſo veteran a commander, who had fought under Gaſton de Foix at Ravenna, and had been the friend and favourite of two monarchs,

Francis

Francis and Henry. He alone could have inſpired the young king with the deſire of reigning himſelf, without his mother's pernicious counſels; and his death left her genius full ſcope to exert its deſtructive influence *.

The

* The conſtable," ſays Davila, "though overpowered by the fury of Condé's and Coligni's attack, yet continued to fight deſperately. He had already received four ſlight wounds in the face, and one very large one on the head, from a battle-axe. While he was attempting to rally his diſmayed troops, Robert Stuart rode up to him, with a piſtol levelled at his head." 'Doſt thou not know me?' ſaid Montmorenci, 'I am the conſtable of France.' "'Yes,' anſwered Stuart, 'I know thee well, and "'therefore I preſent thee this.'—So ſaying, he diſcharged the piſtol into his body. The conſtable fell; but while falling, daſhed the hilt of his ſword, which he had held faſt in his hand, though the blade was broke, into his enemy's mouth. So forcible was the blow, that it fractured his jawbone, and laid him inſtantly on the ground. All his followers abandoned Montmorenci; and the Hugonots were carrying off his body, when the duke of Aumale and d'Amville, having routed the van commanded by Coligni, came up, and reſcued him,

The poſt of conſtable was not filled up after Montmorenci. Several lords of the

" him. They carried him, inſenſible and dying, to " Paris.—He expired on the enſuing day, with un- " daunted compoſure and magnanimity."

Davila ſpeaks with perfect impartiality of his character.—" He was," ſays he, " a man of great capa- " city, mature wiſdom, and long experience. Thoſe " who judged of him diſpaſſionately, allowed he was " a valiant ſoldier, and a dutiful ſervant; but a bad " friend, and ever ſovereignly governed by his own " intereſt." The conſtable was in his ſeventy-fifth year, when killed. His funeral rites were conducted with unuſual pomp and ſolemnity.

Robert Stuart was afterwards taken priſoner at the battle of Jarnac, and brought before Henry duke of Anjou. The marquis De Villars beſought the prince's permiſſion to put him to death, as an offering to the manes of Montmorenci. He long refuſed to conſent to ſo baſe a murder; but at length, overcome with the importunity of the marquis, he turned his head aſide, and ſaid, " Well then—be it ſo."—Stuart, with animated entreaty, repreſented to him how ignominious and daſtardly a conduct he was about to authoriſe; and endeavoured to awaken his compaſſion and ſenſe of honour.—All was ineffectual. He was led a little on one ſide, diſarmed, and put to death, even in the hearing of the duke. Even Brantome, corrupt as he was, ſpeaks with honeſt indignation

the court requeſting it, Charles, jealous of his authority, and deeming this charge too great and near the throne, refuſed to confer it on any ſubject. "I want no "perſon," ſaid he, "to carry my ſword: "I am well able to carry it myſelf."— His character began to unveil and diſcloſe itſelf. He poſſeſſed almoſt all the qualities requiſite to conſtitute a great monarch, had they not been corrupted and depraved by examples and inſtructions the moſt flagitious. Diſſimulation, cruelty, ferocity, libertiniſm, were either familiariſed to him by conſtant habit, or even inculcated into him as virtues. Catherine, only anxious to reign, endeavoured to prevent her ſon from feeling his own powers, and of conſequence freeing himſelf from the ſtate of tutelage, in which ſhe held him.

Meanwhile the Hugonot army retired; and, in defiance of the royal forces, ef-

dignation and abhorrence of this infamous act, exactly ſimilar to Monteſquiou's, and the prince of Conde's.

fected its junction with Caſimir, ſon to the elector Palatine, who led to their aſſiſtance ſome German auxiliaries. The city of La Rochelle declared in their favour, and La Noue, one of their generals, made himſelf maſter of Orleans: but the prince of Condé was repulſed before Sens, by Henry the young duke of Guiſe. His combined troops formed a numerous body; and in the hope of being again able to inveſt or diſtreſs the capital, he laid ſiege to Chartres. It ſucceeded ill; but while he remained before it, new propoſitions of peace were tendered. They terminated in the treaty of Chartres, concluded on terms nearly ſimilar to the preceding one: but the Hugonots, who were diſſatisfied with it, as fraudulent and dangerous, gave it the denomination of "La "Paix boiteuſe et mal-aſſize," from the two principal negotiators of it on the part of the king; one of whom, the marechal de Biron, was lame, and the other was ſeigneur of the land of "Mal-affize." It, however, produced a temporary ſuſ-

penſion of hoſtilities, though it could neither diffuſe tranquillity, nor diminiſh that diſtruſt and averſion which the oppoſite parties nouriſhed againſt each other. ——Here, as a ſort of epocha preceding the yet more bloody ſcenes of this calamitous reign, I ſtop.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

Attempt to ſeize the prince of Condé.—Third civil war.—Battle of Jarnac.—Death of Condé.—Circumſtances.—Character of Gaſpard de Coligni.—Of Jane, queen of Navarre.—Siege of Poitiers.—Battle of Moncontour.—Arrival of the king in the camp before St. John d'Angeli.—Wondrous march of Coligni.—Peace concluded.—Treachery of the court.—King's marriage to the archduchеſs Elizabeth.—Her character.—Feſtivities at court.—Policy of Catherine.—Reflections.—Diſſimulation of Charles and the queen mother, to deceive Coligni.—He goes to court.—Seeds of diviſion between the king and Henry duke of Anjou.—Contraſt of their characters.—Affiance of Henry prince of Navarre to Margaret of Valois.—Death of the queen of Navarre.—Circumſtances.—Inquiry into the nature of it.—Coligni perſiſts to remain at Paris.—Margaret of Valois.—Her nuptials.—Character.—

Attempt to aſſaſſinate Coligni.—Diſſimulation of Charles.—Reſolution taken to exterminate the Huguenots.—Terrors and irreſolution of the king previous to the maſſacre.—Death of Coligni.—Deaths of the Huguenot chiefs.—Detail of circumſtances attending the maſſacre of Paris.—Conduct of Charles.—Fourth civil war.—Siege of La Rochelle.—Character of the duke of Alençon.—Remorſe of the king.—Election of the duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland.—Carouſals at court.—Charles's impatience for his brother's departure.—Mary of Cleves.—Her character.—Relation of her amour with the duke of Anjou.—The king quarrels with his mother.—Henry begins his journey.—Illneſs of Charles.—Suſpicions on that event.—King of Poland arrives at Cracow.—He abandons himſelf to grief.—New commotions.—Change in the king.—Conſpiracy of the duke of Alençon diſcovered.—Charles's indiſpoſition increaſes.—Intrigues of the queen mother to ſecure the regency.—Execution of La Mole and Coconas.—Circumſtances

cumſtances of the king's laſt illneſs.—His expiring commands.—Death of Charles the ninth.—Enquiry into the cauſe of it.—His character.—Children.—Funerals.—Concluſion of the Memoirs.

SUCH was the ſanguinary zeal which animated the partizans of either religion in theſe unhappy times; ſuch was the perfidious ſyſtem of policy embraced and purſued by Catherine of Medicis, that no permanent accommodation or coalition could take place throughout the kingdom. Scarce any of the conditions ſtipulated by the late treaty of Chartres were obſerved. Mutual rage armed the hands of Catholics and Hugonots againſt each other. Alternate inſults and violences were committed, which ſtrongly evinced how little they could be reſtrained by edicts of toleration; and the treacherous intentions of the court ſoon appeared too viſibly to be miſtaken.

The prince of Condé, not daring to truſt himſelf in the power of his ene-

mies, had retired to a chateau of his wife at Noyers in Burgundy, whither Coligni likewiſe repaired. While they remained in this retirement, a ſoldier was one day obſerved in the act of meaſuring the foſſe and walls, as if with intent to aſcertain, whether they might be ſucceſsfully attacked. The queen, who had intended to environ and ſurprize the great leaders of the Calviniſts, no ſooner found that her deſigns were diſcovered, than ſhe ordered the royal troops to enter Burgundy. Condé and the admiral, who ſaw the project concerted for their deſtruction, were ſenſible of the extreme peril in which they ſtood. No ſafety was to be found except in flight, and that attended likewiſe with celerity. It was not eaſy to evade the many detached bodies of ſoldiery, already planted to intercept their paſſage: Neceſſity however dictated it as the ſole means of preſervation. The two generals therefore left Noyers, only eſcorted by a hundred and fifty cavalry, in the centre of which were placed their wives and children. Fortune favoured their en-

terprize. An unuſual drought enabled them to ford the Loire; and after having traverſed a number of hoſtile provinces, amid continual and imminent dangers, they arrived ſafely at La Rochelle.

The conduct of the court breathed the moſt inſatiable thirſt of revenge. No healing meaſures were embraced amid the fury which ſeemed to poſſeſs and actuate them.—De l'Hopital, too mild and virtuous for the manners of a corrupt adminiſtration, and ſuſpected of a partiality to the Hugonots, was deprived of the ſeals, and diſgraced. The duke of Anjou, only ſixteen years of age, was placed by his mother at the head of the royal army, though the marechal de Tavannes ſuperintended and principally directed its operations. The young prince having joined his forces, an engagement was expected—but the advanced ſeaſon of the year prevented it, and obliged both commanders to retire into winter quarters.

The enſuing ſpring ſaw them again in

the field. After many unſucceſsful attempts, the duke of Anjou at length compelled the Hugonots to a deciſive action. The ſcene of war lay in the province of Angoumois, on the banks of the river Charente; and the fatal day of Jarnac put an end to the prince of Condé's life *.

In

* The victory of Jarnac muſt be entirely attributed to the prodigious diſparity of numbers. The Hugonot infantry were almoſt all abſent from the field of action, and only the cavalry diſputed the day, with a courage and conſtancy which approached to frenzy.—Coligni was firſt attacked; and the prince of Condé, who lay at ſome diſtance, galloped immediately to his aſſiſtance. He made a maſterly diſpoſition, and ſuſtained long, with far inferior ſtrength, the whole fury of the Catholic army.

D'Andelot, who had been left with only a hundred and twenty horſe, to delay the enemy, and give time to Condé to range his ſoldiery, performed this dangerous commiſſion with his accuſtomed intrepidity and ſucceſs. He filled the place, in which he had taken his ſtand, with confuſion, ſmoke, and carnage. At the commencement of the attack, he rode up to Monſalez, who headed the firſt ſquadrons of the Catholic horſe; and lifting up with his bridle hand the vizor of his helmet, diſcharged, with the other, a piſtol into his

In that memorable battle, he behaved with a heroiſm and courage almoſt unexampled in

his face, and laid him dead on the ground.—Overborne by numbers, d'Andelot at length gave way, and retired to the main body.

Here the engagement was renewed with incredible obſtinacy.—The admiral and his brother, in the left wing, maintained the combat for near an hour, againſt the young duke of Guiſe. But the royal army being continually ſupplied with freſh troops, Coligni's own ſtandard beat to the ground, and the van completely routed, they deemed it unavailing to continue the fight, and provided for their ſafety by flight.—In the right wing, the counts of Montgomeri and La Rochefoucault, diſputed with equal courage the glory of the day; but were at laſt compelled to quit the field.

Only the prince of Condé remained, incapable of turning his back. He was in the center, and had encountered, in the beginning of the action, the duke of Anjou's own ſquadron. Though repeatedly broken and charged through, he yet rallied his men, and returned to the engagement. Even when almoſt deſerted, after the retreat of his adherents, and totally ſurrounded by the oppoſite forces, he fought with invincible courage. His horſe being killed under him, and himſelf wounded in many places, he yet continued to defend and ward off the blows aimed at him, with one knee upon the ground, till Monteſquiou put an end to his life.

The

in ſtory. His arm was in a ſcarf at the time when it began. As he marched up at the head of his troops, his brother-in-law the count de la Rochefoucault's horſe reared, and broke his leg. Unmoved by ſo painful an accident, and ſcorning to betray any emotions unbecoming his high ſtation in that important moment, he coolly turned to thoſe around him: "Learn," ſaid he, "that unruly horſes "do more injury than ſervice, in an ar-"my!"—An inſtant after, previous to the charge, addreſſing his followers, "French "nobility," ſaid he, "know that the "prince of Condé, with an arm in a "ſcarf, and a leg broke, fears not to "give battle, ſince you attend him!"

The fortune of the day was unfavour-

The duke of Anjou behaved with the utmoſt bravery in this action, and ſhewed a dauntleſs ſpirit above his years. He once narrowly eſcaped being killed.—After the prince of Condé's death, no farther reſiſtance was made. It became a flight; and evening, which drew on, in ſome meaſure befriended the conquered Hugonots. All theſe particulars are drawn from Davila. I omit many others, leſs intereſting.

able

able to the Hugonots; and Condé, thrown from his horſe, was ſurrounded, and taken priſoner. Spent with fatigue, and wounded, they ſeated him at the foot of a tree; when Monteſquiou, captain of the duke of Anjou's Swiſs guards galloped up to the ſpot. Having demanded who he was, and being informed, "Tuez, tuez, mor-"dieu!" ſaid he; and drawing out a piſtol, diſcharged a ball into his head, which inſtantly killed him. The cool and mercileſs barbarity of this aſſaſſination, on a man wounded and defenceleſs, after the heat of the action was paſt, excited univerſal abhorrence; and the enormity of the crime was rendered more conſpicuous, from the high rank of the perſon put to death. The duke of Anjou neither avowed or puniſhed it, but he permitted the prince's body to be laid upon an aſs, and carried to the caſtle of Jarnac, where he went himſelf to lodge *.

Thus

* Though Davila does not ſpeak of the prince of Condé's death, as of an aſſaſſination, yet ſuch it muſt be

Thus fell the firſt Louis prince of Condé, by the hand of an aſſaſſin, rather than of a warrior.

be eſteemed. The French hiſtorians are unanimous on this point. He however relates the circumſtance of his being carried acroſs a *pack-horſe* to the caſtle of Jarnac, to the joy and ſavage diverſion of the whole army, who jeſted at this melancholy and affecting ſpectacle. He adds, that the duke of Anjou would not ſuffer any indignity to be offered to his body, in conſideration of his alliance to the blood royal. He owns all his ſublime and ſhining qualities, and only laments that they were obſcured by rebellion.

"We found him," ſays the writer of the duke of Montpenſier's life, "lying acroſs an aſs; and the "baron de Magnac aſked me if I ſhould know him "again? But as he had one eye out of his head, and "was otherwiſe much disfigured, I knew not what "to anſwer. The corpſe was brought in before all "the princes and lords, who ordered his face to be "waſhed, and recognized him perfectly. They "then put him into a ſheet, and he was carried be-"fore a man on horſeback to the caſtle of Jarnac, "where Monſeigneur, the king's brother, went to "lodge."

Brantome has likewiſe given us many intereſting circumſtances of this tragical event. The prince, ſays he, fought with a courage heightened by deſpair, on that day. He was however ſoon beat to the ground

by

a warrior. The unhappy circumſtances of the times had, in ſome degree, neceſſitated him, though allied by blood to the crown, to unſheath the ſword againſt his ſovereign; and the great capacities for military enterprize which he poſſeſſed,

by ſuperior numbers. It had been recommended to the duke of Anjou's favourites, to kill Condé at all events; and Henry himſelf did not diſguiſe the joy which he felt at it. After the action was over, he choſe to gratify his eyes with the ſight of his dead body; and it was then thrown, in deriſion and mockery, acroſs an old ſhe-aſs, the head and legs dangling down on either ſide. It remained during the enſuing night, in a room exactly under that where the duke ſlept. After having been expoſed to the view of the whole army, it was reſtored to the duke of Longueville his brother-in-law, who interred him with his anceſtors at Vendome. There was made on him this ſarcaſtic epitaph,

"L'an mil cinq cens ſoixante neuf,
"Entre Jarnac et Chateau-neuf,
"Fut porté ſur une aneſſe,
"Cil qui vouloit oſter la Meſſe."

Brantome ſays, he intimately knew Monteſquiou, and that he was a brave and gallant gentleman. At the ſubſequent ſiege of St. John d'Angeli, he was killed by the ball of a harquebuſſe.

rendered

rendered him the hero of his own party, and the terror of the oppoſite one. There is too much reaſon to believe that Henry duke of Anjou authorized and commanded the captain of his guard to put him to death. He was not naturally cruel; but the prince of Condé had been his rival for the lieutenancy of the kingdom, and was peculiarly an object of his deteſtation: beſides that in him they apprehended the whole Hugonot faction muſt infallibly be deſtroyed *.

Coligni, who with the broken remains of the cavalry, had retreated to St. John

* Monſieur de Voltaire, in his beautiful poem of the Henriade, introduces Henry the fourth pathetically lamenting the prince's death. It is to our Elizabeth he relates the ſtory. His lines are ſo maſterly and touching, that I ſhall make no apology for the inſertion of them. It is Henry who exclaims:

" O! Plaines de Jarnac! O! coup trop inhumain!
" Barbare Monteſquiou, moins guerrier qu' aſſaſſin,
" Condé deja mourant tomba ſous ta furie;
" J'ai vu porter le coup; j'ai vu trancher ſa vie.
" Helas! trop jeune encore, mon bras, mon foible
" bras
" Ne put ni prévenir ni venger ſon trepas."

d'Angeli,

d'Angeli, became by the death of the prince, the leader of the Calviniſt forces. He was in every reſpect equal to, and calculated for this arduous ſtation. Of years more ripe and advanced than Condé, he joined the experience of a veteran commander, to a courage the moſt intrepid and undiſmayed. Loyal to his prince even in the midſt of rebellion; ardently zealous for the glory of his country, though a fatal neceſſity compelled him to appear in arms againſt it, Nature had deſigned him to promote its grandeur and proſperity. In happier times he had been the guardian of France, enrolled among her heroes and patriots, her Condé's and her Turennes. Leſs ambitious than the prince, he was ever ready to accept the overtures of peace. More attached to the religious principles of Calviniſm, and unſeduced by love or pleaſure, to ſacrifice and forget them, he ſteadily purſued thoſe objects for the defence of which he had firſt drawn the ſword. Fertile in reſources, vaſt and capacious in his projects, riſing

riſing on his defeats, and magnanimous in circumſtances the moſt diſtreſsful, he long ſuſtained with inferior force, the utmoſt efforts of his victorious enemies.

Jane, queen of Navarre, a princeſs endowed with virtues and qualities of the higheſt nature; and inheriting from her mother Margaret of Valois a ſtrength of mind, and elegance of genius rarely found, ſeconded the admiral's meaſures for the protection and preſervation of the Hugonot party. She brought her ſon Henry, yet in early youth, to La Rochelle, and Coligni was declared general of the forces, under the prince of Navarre, and his couſin the young prince of Condé.

The intelligence of the victory at Jarnac, and the death of the Hugonot leader, was received at Paris with unuſual demonſtrations of joy. The king roſe at midnight to ſing Te Deum in perſon, announced it to all the ſovereign princes, and ſent the ſtandards gained in the action to Rome, as a preſent the moſt acceptable to the pontiff. The real advantages reſulting from

from it to the royal party, were however very inconsiderable. Henry duke of Anjou was repulsed before Cognac; while Coligni, reinforced from every quarter, appeared again in the field, more terrible from his late ill success. The death of his brother d'Andelot, who expired of a pestilential fever at the city of Saintes, was deeply regretted by all his adherents, who lost in him a chieftain eminent for intrepidity and martial spirit.

Meanwhile the admiral, at the head of an army, faced the duke of Anjou in the Limosin, after having effected a junction with count Mansfeldt, who led to his assistance a large reinforcement of German auxiliaries. In the great skirmish of La Roche Abeille, the Hugonots were victorious; while the count de Montgomeri, one of their most active and enterprizing generals, reduced all Bearn to obedience, and extended his ravages into Languedoc.

Coligni, encouraged by these prosperous events, determined once more to pass the Loire, and carry the war to the gates of

Paris, as the only effectual means to procure a termination of it: but unfortunately, he changed his reſolutions, and undertook the ſiege of Poitiers.—Henry duke of Guiſe, ſon to Francis, and not inferior to his father in genius, in courage, or ambition, had thrown himſelf into it. Panting to ſignalize his proweſs, and animated with uncommon deteſtation to the admiral, whom he ever regarded as his father's murderer, he made a defence the moſt obſtinate and reſolute. Coligni, compelled at length by the duke of Anjou's near approach, who had laid ſiege to Chatelleraud, and finding his forces greatly diminiſhed, retired without ſucceſs from before the place. The battle of Moncontour, which followed only a few days afterwards, ſeemed to menace with total deſtruction the Hugonot party. The action laſted more than three hours; and victory declared a ſecond time for Henry and the Catholics. Near nine thouſand French and Germans of the vanquiſhed ſide, were left upon the field. Scarce

could

could Coligni, wounded in the face, and accompanied by about three hundred cavalry, who in ſome meaſure ſtopt the purſuit of the conquerors, ſecure his retreat to Parthenai *.

Any

* This was the moſt bloody and deciſive engagement of any which was fought during the civil wars. It began two hours after ſun-riſe. Coligni, who knew that the Catholics were ſuperior to his own forces in diſcipline, ſtill more than in numbers, would have declined a conteſt, the inequality of which was viſible; but the clamours of his ſoldiery, and peculiarly of the German auxiliaries, compelled him, reluctantly, to hazard the iſſue of battle.

It was diſputed with ſuch incredible obſtinacy and mutual antipathy, that the very ſutlers, lacqueys, and pioneers of either camp, mingled in the fray; and each individual fought, as if on his perſonal exertion alone the fortune of the day depended. Conqueſt long hung dubious; but at length the Switzers in the royal army having cut to pieces the Germans of whom ſcarce two hundred remained alive, an univerſal rout ſucceeded.

Henry duke of Anjou ſignalized his courage, and appeared ever in the firſt ranks of danger; he narrowly eſcaped death more than once. But the admiral exerted on that day, the raſh and impetuous courage of the youngeſt ſoldier, as well as the conduct of an

Any genius, except his own, muſt have ſunk under this diſaſtrous reverſe of fortune: but his mind, accuſtomed to adverſity, and unſhaken in every ſituation, ſeemed to rally and collect its powers in this moment of diſtreſs. The very even-

able general. The Rhinegrave encountered him in perſon; and firing his piſtol into his face, beat out four of his teeth, and broke his jaw. Coligni diſcharging his own into the Rhinegrave's vizor, laid him inſtantly dead upon the ground. He afterwards continued gallantly fighting, though the blood ran in ſuch quantity from his wound, as to fill both his helmet and gorget.

At length, ſeeing his troops diſperſed on all ſides, and flying before the conquerors; his voice quite ſpent and ſcarce capable of being heard; himſelf covered with blood, and ſinking under fatigue, he found it vain longer to diſpute the field.—Retiring therefore with the two young princes of Navarre and Condé, who had remained at ſome diſtance during the combat, he gained Parthenai the ſame evening.—The counts of Manſfeldt and Naſſau, with about two thouſand of their men, joined him at night.—The duke of Anjou commanded quarter to be given to three thouſand of the French infantry, who had thrown down their arms. Near two hundred colours were taken. I extract theſe particulars principally from Davila,

ing

ing of the day on which the battle was fought, though almoſt incapacitated from ſpeaking by his wound, he held a council of his chief officers; and diſpatched meſſengers into England, Switzerland, and the German ſtates, to announce his perilous condition and late defeat. He demanded, as in the common cauſe of religion, a ſupply of troops and money, without which the conſequences to his party muſt be the moſt fatal. Himſelf in perſon retired into the province of Saintonge; and collecting the ſcattered fugitives diſperſed at Moncontour, meditated new oppoſition to the royal forces.

Had Henry inſtantly purſued the enemy broken and diſpirited by ſo many calamities, before they had ſufficiently recovered from their terror to reunite and appear in the field; he would probably have exterminated almoſt the whole of them, or at leaſt rendered them incapable of farther reſiſtance: but the ſiege of St. John d'Angeli, which he immediately commenced, deſtroyed all the beneficial

conſequences, that might have reſulted from his late victory. Charles, who had long beheld his brother's glory with a jealous emulation, and who poſſeſſed equal or ſuperior courage, could no longer be reſtrained from appearing in the army. Catherine, attached to the duke of Anjou with a peculiar tenderneſs of affection, and anxiouſly endeavouring by every means to exalt this favourite child, tried in vain to withhold the king. On his arrival in the camp before St. John d'Angeli, he appeared tranſported with the ſcene: he was conſtantly preſent in the trenches, expoſed his perſon like the meaneſt ſoldier, and declared publicly, that he would gladly ſhare his crown with Henry, ſo he might alternately command the forces *.

After

* Charles early ſaw with diſcontent, his mother's partiality to the duke of Anjou; he complained of it to her; and his temper, naturally impetuous, quick and violent, could not brook this preference. Catherine on the other hand, diſcerning and penetrative, feared that Charles, endowed with great capacity for

After a ſiege of two months the city capitulated; but La Noue, and the count de la Rochefoucault yet ſuſtained the party in La Rochelle; while Coligni having aſſembled all his adherents, began that wondrous march through ſo many provinces, almoſt unexampled in hiſtory*.

In

for affairs, would not always be held in tutelage, and might eventually diſpenſe with her counſels, and deprive her of all power. Henry's indolence and ſubmiſſion ſecured her from thoſe apprehenſions, in caſe he ſhould ever mount the throne.

An anecdote which Brantome mentions, very ſtrongly evinces the king's diſſatisfaction at Henry's trophies and early greatneſs. Soon after the battle of Moncontour, D'Orat the poet had preſented him ſome verſes in his praiſe.—"It is not to me," ſaid "Charles, theſe eulogiums are due! I have not me-"rited any panegyrics, or performed any high ex-"ploits! To my brother they may, indeed, juſtly "be addreſſed, who is every day employed in acquir-"ing renown in arms."

* The following ſong, ſays Brantome, was commonly ſung by the Hugonot ſoldiers, after Louis prince of Condé's untimely death.

"Le prince de Condé,
"Il a été tué;

In defiance of the inclemency of winter, of ſo many rivers which interſected his courſe, of the royal generals and Catholic forces, he traverſed all Languedoc, remounted along the banks of the Rhone, and appeared in Burgundy the enſuing ſpring, after having carried terror through all the ſouth of France.

Charles, of high and determined ſpirit, ſubmitted with difficulty to permit the admiral thus to ravage his dominions, unpurſued. He would have followed him immediately, had not the queen, who dreaded his aſſuming the command in perſon, prevented him, by the remonſtrances of the marechal de Tavannes, who aſſured his majeſty, that the troops were already too much exhauſted and broken, to attempt new enterpriſes in ſo advanced a ſeaſon.

"Mais monſieur l'Admiral
"Eſt encore à cheval,
"Avec La Rochefoucaut,
"Pour chaſſer tous ces papaux, papaux, papaux!"

The

The re-appearance of Coligni at the head of a formidable army; the combat of Arnay-le-Duc, where he had manifestly the advantage; the complicated ills under which the unhappy kingdom groaned; and the dread of future calamities yet more insupportable, at length produced a termination of hostilities. Peace so long and anxiously desired, was again re-established on terms not unfavourable to the Hugonots; and public tranquillity seemed once more to spread a calm over the state, shaken and convulsed by so many intestine commotions.—But all these flattering appearances concealed the most horrible designs; and Catherine, whom experience had convinced, that Coligni and the Calvinists were not to be reduced by force, had already planned the fatal massacre, which she executed two years after. All the intermediate period was employed in the most consummate dissimulation; in the fallacious arts of lulling to sleep the wretches destined to destruction. Only the vast and comprehensive

henſive genius of the queen-mother, containing and uniting in itſelf the ſprings of all human diſcord and confuſion, could have concerted a ſyſtem of vengeance ſo enormouſly flagitious, ſo unprecedented in the long records of time. Like ſome miniſter of an angry Deity, ſhe appears occupied only in ſchemes of ruin to her unhappy people, ſcattering death, and marking her courſe with carnage and deſolation.

Pleaſure and diſſipation notwithſtanding ſeemed to engage the whole court; and the marriage of Margaret, ſiſter to the king, with Henry prince of Navarre, was already propoſed, as the connecting tie of union and obliteration *.

The

* It is impoſſible not to enter with ſome minuteneſs and curioſity into the amours of Margaret of Valois, the moſt beautiful, accompliſhed, but diſſolute princeſs of modern times. It is ſaid, ſo violent was her love of pleaſure, that at twelve years of age, ſhe had ſacrificed her honour to it. The young Entragues and Charry, captain in the royal guards, diſpute the precedency in her affections. It is at leaſt

The duke of Guiſe, enamour'd of the princeſs, attempted to raiſe obſtacles to thoſe

leaſt certain, that both had enjoyed her perſon at thoſe unripe years.—Her warm and animated attachment to her own brother, Henry duke of Anjou, gave riſe to ſimilar ſuſpicions; which, indeed, her character, conduct, and writings, all tend to confirm. Henry was handſome, amiable, and fond of women: The libertiniſm of the court authoriſed every debauchery. The duke of Guiſe was beloved by her with the moſt unbounded paſſion. She herſelf does not diſguiſe it in her memoirs; and the duke of Anjou withdrew from her his confidence, when he found the duke of Guiſe maſter of her perſon and affections.

In the celebrated manifeſto, which Henry the fourth cauſed to be drawn up, and preſented to the reigning pope, as a juſtification of his conduct, in ſoliciting a divorce from Margaret, he minutely enumerates her debaucheries, and ſucceſſive lovers. I think it ſo aſtoniſhing and unparalleled a diſcloſure of the queen's conduct, that I ſhall extract ſeveral particulars from it.

"The princeſs, ſays the manifeſto, was only *eleven* "years old, when ſhe began to yield to the plea"ſures of love. Entragues and Charry were in turn "favoured by her; and the former carried his proofs "of attachment to ſuch a length, as nearly to "ſacrifice to it his life. The prince of Martigues

"ſucceeded

theſe nuptials, in the hope of obtaining himſelf her hand. Charles, indignant of his

ſucceeded to their place, and was fondly beloved. Naturally vain, he could not conceal an intrigue ſo flattering, and divulged the ſecret of their amours, which became univerſally known. He always wore on the moſt dangerous occaſions, an embroidered ſcarf, which his royal miſtreſs had given him; as well as a beautiful little dog, preſented by the ſame hand.

"The tears ſhe ſhed for this favourite's death, were dried by the duke of Guiſe; who became in turn her paramour, by the good offices of madame de Carnavalet."——"On pretend," continues Henry, "que les ducs d'Anjou et d'Alençon troublerent cette intrigue; et qu'elle eut pour eux des complaiſances, que le droit du ſang n'autoriſoit pas; mais je ne puis croire, que ſa debauche ait été juſqu'à cet excès."

All theſe lovers preceded the king of Navarre.—Henry the fourth then avows, in the moſt pointed terms, his completion of the marriage rites.—The words are very curious.—"Quoiqu'il en ſoit, elle n'avoit pas mal debuté avant notre mariage; et tout le monde ſera aiſément perſuadé, que je n'ai pas eu beſoin d'une grande vigueur, pour emporter la bague à la premiere courſe."

The manifeſto continues the enumeration of her ſubſequent irregularities and gallantries. They almoſt

his conduct, and reſenting ſuch preſumption, gave orders to his natural brother Henry d'Angouleſme, to put the duke to death, as he went to the chace; but he deprecated this vengeance by a ſpeedy marriage with Catherine of Cleves, widow to the prince of Portien *.

The

moſt exceed the limits of credibility. Yet Henry, in the beginning of this extraordinary piece, which is opened with the greateſt ſolemnity, atteſts the Deity as the judge of human actions, for the veracity of his aſſertions, and integrity of his intentions.—I may have occaſion to mention both it, and Margaret, elſewhere.

* Even Davila confirms the attachment of the duke of Guiſe to the princeſs Margaret; and ſays, ſhe long perſiſted peremptorily to refuſe any other huſband.—"One night," adds he, "as the duke was going "into the great hall of the palace, there being a ball "at court, dreſſed with the utmoſt magnificence, and "adorned with jewels, he met the king, who had "planted himſelf purpoſely at the door. Charles, "with an angry air, demanded, "Whither he was "going?" The duke anſwered, "That he came to "ſerve his majeſty."—"I have no occaſion for your "ſervices," replied he.—Henry ſaw the perilous "ſituation in which he had engaged himſelf; and de-

"termined

The king had already entered into his twenty-first year. It was become advisable to marry him; and his mother, after having vainly solicited Elizabeth of England's hand, fixed on the archduchess Elizabeth, daughter of the emperor Maximilian the second.—The two dukes of Anjou and Alençon, Charles's brothers, were sent to receive the new queen at Sedan; and he himself advanced to meet her at Mezieres, where the nuptials were solemnized and accomplished. She was an amiable and virtuous princess, devout, humble and submissive. Her capacity, limited and slender, gave Catherine no umbrage; and she was neither consulted in, or privy to any of the iniquitous measures pursued during her husband's reign. Though agreeable in her person, though mild and gentle in her manners, she never could attain any empire over Charles's heart, and only possessed his esteem. The beau-

"termined instantly to recover his sovereign's favour, "by putting it out of his own power to be obnoxious "to him."

tiful

tiful Mary Touchet had long reigned there without a rival; and the king, naturally conſtant, remained unalterably attached to her till the hour of his death*.

Elizabeth was notwithſtanding crowned ſoon after at St. Denis; and the queen-mother, whoſe magnificence and taſte eminently appeared on theſe occaſions, diſplayed all her talents for pleaſure in

* Mary Touchet was daughter to the "Lieutenant "Particulier" of Orleans. The time of Charles's firſt attachment to her is not certain; but it appears that ſhe had acquired the higheſt influence over him before his marriage, ſince from the anecdote of the picture, it is clear ſhe dreaded no rival.—Elizabeth of Auſtria's portrait being ſhewn her, ſhe ſaid, after having attentively regarded it; "L'Allemande ne me "fait pas peur!"—Her perſonal and mental attractions were equally pre-eminent. "I have ſeen her "picture," ſays the author of the "Anecdotes des "reines et regentes de France," "done in Crayons, "and during the prime of her beauty. The contour "of her face was round, her eyes finely ſhaped and "lively, her forehead ſmall, her noſe juſtly proportioned, her mouth little and crimſon, the lower "part of her face admirable." Such was the celebrated Mary Touchet!

the

the entertainments exhibited at court. The fictions of antiquity, the allegories of Greek and Roman fable were called in to embellish the representations. A refinement, superior to the progress which the human mind had made in the fifteenth century, and little, if in any degree inferior to the splendid displays of art and luxurious elegance under Louis the fourteenth's reign, characterises all the amusements and carousals of Catherine. Her extraordinary and universal genius comprehended every thing in its embrace; and shone equally distinguished, whether exerted in the cabinet or at a banquet, whether directed to the destruction or delight of human kind. She even seems to have blended and united things the most opposite and discordant. Her versatility of mind enabled her to pass with the most rapid transition, from the horrors of war, to all the voluptuous dissipations of indolence and peace; and we are forced to lament, that a capacity so exalted and sublime, only produced, from the principles

which actuated it, more general and lasting evils to mankind *.

The grand ſcheme of deceiving the Hugonot leaders and drawing them into the fatal ſnare, now totally occupied the queen-mother. She had tutored the king her ſon but too well, and inſtructed him in all the leſſons of profound and pernicious diſſimulation. His very virtues and great qualities were transformed under her baneful touch, into vices and crimes. His prudence, penetration, and diſcretion, ſhe

* In the entertainments preſented at court on Elizabeth's coronation, the peculiar ſituation of the ſtate was enigmatically figur'd under various forms. It was a political mirror, under the appearance of an amuſement. Charles the ninth was repreſented in the character of Jupiter; Catherine, in that of Juno; the young queen, in that of Minerva. The Hugonots appeared under the names of Typhon and the Giants. Even the vengeance of St. Bartholomew, already planned, was darkly alluded to in the mottos and devices choſen. This was one, addreſſed to the king.

"Cadme, relinque ratem; paſtoria ſibila finge;
"Fas ſuperare dolo, quem vis non vincit aperta."

The meaning of this remark is too evidently connected with the enſuing maſſacre to be miſtaken.

converted into a ſubtle and perfidious policy. His natural vivacity became paſſion and fury. His courage degenerated into ſtern ferocity; and his heart, ſteeled to the impreſſions of benevolence, reſtitude and pity, was inflamed with a ſavage thirſt of blood and vengeance.—For Catherine there is no apology, no juſtification to the lateſt poſterity. Her name, in diſtant ages, will be pronounced with deteſtation; nor can the brilliancy of her genius, the ſeduction of her captivating manners, preſerve her from ignominy and abhorrence.—But over Charles, over the miſerable king, every eye of ſenſibility will drop a tear! Accuſtom'd from infancy to precepts and examples the moſt unworthy; taught to nouriſh a ſanguinary zeal, as the immediate voice of Heaven, and encouraged to ſpill the blood of his ſubjects, as meritorious and acceptable to it, how could he eſcape the unhappy infection! Too late he awoke from the dreadful deluſion. Too late he beheld the abyſs of ruin and

infamy,

infamy, into which his mother's fatal maxims and advice had plunged him. Death permitted him not to expiate his offences; and he expired in the flower of youth, an awful leſſon to future times, that monarchs cannot, with impunity, violate the great and ſacred duties of humanity!

Every artifice of affected pardon, every appearance of oblivion and perfect confidence were practiſed to convince the queen of Navarre and Coligni, that the king and court were diſpoſed to harmony and friendſhip.—The Hugonot deputies were ſent back, after a reception the moſt gracious, with the ampleſt ſecurities and confirmations of the peace. Count Ludovic of Naſſau, and Teſigni, ſon-in-law to the admiral, were received with uncommon diſtinction, and loaded with favours. Coligni was himſelf invited to lay aſide all diſtruſt, and repoſe himſelf on his ſovereign's honour.

Confiding in this ſacred pledge as he deemed it, and happy to give a proof of his

implicit reliance on the virtue of his prince, he came at length to Blois. Charles embraced him, hung upon his neck, and kiſſed him. He gave him the tender and endearing epithet of father; he profeſſed for him the moſt filial deference and reſpect. He was re-admitted into the council; received from the royal bounty a donation of an hundred thouſand livres, and all his eſtates were reſtored. After having permitted him to viſit his caſtle of Chatillon, the king again recalled him; redoubled his careſſes, ſhowered on him a thouſand favours; and even carried his diſſembled attachment to ſo prodigious a length, that the duke of Guiſe, and the more zealous Catholics took the alarm, and began to dread, leſt Coligni ſhould eventually effect that alteration in Charles's heart, which was only feigned originally.

When the admiral withdrew a ſecond time, the king yet kept up a continual and unreſerved communication with him by letters. He re-aſſured him of his determination

termination to accompliſh the nuptials of his ſiſter Margaret with the prince of Navarre; profeſſed to him his reſolute intentions of ſhaking off the fetters, in which his mother and Henry duke of Anjou had hitherto held him: and as the laſt flattering bait, declared that he would ſend an army into the Netherlands, to aſſiſt the revolted provinces againſt Philip the ſecond, at the head of which he ſhould himſelf be placed. Coligni, whoſe boſom glowed with patriotiſm, with the love of his country's glory, and a juſt indignation againſt Spaniſh bigotry and oppreſſion, could not reſiſt ſo animating a motive. He even perſuaded the queen of Navarre to viſit the king and his mother at Blois. She was received with an exceſs of honours, and diſſembled fondneſs. The negotiation for her ſon's marriage was reſumed, and finally concluded as the connecting bond of future tranquillity. Only the diſpenſation from Rome remained, to delay the conſummation of their nuptials.

The trophies which Henry duke of

Anjou had acquired by the two victories of Jarnac and Moncontour, the early glory with which he ſeemed to be inveſted, and the proud title which he emulated, of reſtorer and defender of the ſtate, juſtly gave umbrage to Charles. He beheld himſelf obſcured in Henry's ſuperior luſtre. He regarded him as his rival in fame, perhaps in empire. He ſaw, and reſented Catherine's unconcealed predilection and partiality for him. Theſe ſeeds of averſion and diſcontent began already to ripen and diſplay themſelves.—The queen-mother, who watched with peculiar tenderneſs over her darling ſon, and whoſe ambitious mind ever projected ſchemes of greatneſs for her children, commenced therefore already her intrigues for his election to the crown of Poland. Montluc, biſhop of Valence, was diſpatched to the court of Warſaw, though Sigiſmund Auguſtus, the reigning king, was yet alive; and he ſucceeded beyond expectation in his commiſſion.

The duke of Anjou ſeemed at this time

to

to present the idea of the most accomplished hero; nor can we be surprized, on the consideration of his brilliant qualities and numerous graces, at Catherine's attachment to him. His person was beautiful, and finely made, above any prince's of the age *. A majesty, tempered with sweetness, accompanied all his movements and actions. His courage had been distinguished in two great engagements, and at years the most immature. An eloquence flowing, dignified, and commanding, disposed all hearts to admire and love

* Desportes, the most elegant poet of the time, describes him in these lines. It is the portrait of Adonis himself.

" Il eut la taille belle et le visage beau;
" Son teint étoit de lys, et de roses pourprets;
" Et ses yeux rigoureux dardoient mille sagettes.
" On le prend pour l'amour!"——

Davila confirms the high idea of the duke of Anjou, and expatiates minutely on his uncommon personal beauty, courage, eloquence, and other elegant or sublime qualities. He says, all mankind had their eyes fixed on him, and had conceived the greatest expectations from his future conduct.

him. His preſence and demeanour announced a prince: nor had the houſe of Valois produced any one, whoſe perſonal manners were ſo winning and ſeductive.

The contraſt in many points of light, though uneſſential, between himſelf and the king, tended to raiſe him into ſuperior luſtre. Charles, endowed with much greater qualifications, more calculated to reign; poſſeſſing vigour, capacity, diſcernment, memory, activity, judgment, courage, was yet carried away by the impetuoſity of his paſſions, and preſented little except the unamiable part of his character to view.—Henry, under a captivating and deceptive exterior, cover'd with imputed virtues, and decked with laurels which Tavannes's wiſdom and conduct had won, was defective in that force of mind, thoſe kingly qualities worthy of a throne, with which his brother was enriched. Beneath that winning form was concealed an effeminate indolence, a voluptuous and enervate ſoftneſs, a prodigality without bounds, an indulgence to favourites,

favourites, the moſt pernicious to his kingdom and himſelf.—The firſt, it is probable, had he lived, would have wiped out his crimes, and ſhewn himſelf worthy the crown he wore.—The latter ſurvived to complete the ſad tiſſue of ills begun under Charles, and fell at length a ſacrifice to his own miſconduct, weakneſs, and irreſolution.

The duke of Anjou had not, however, yet betrayed thoſe errors and vices, which characterized Henry the third, on his acceſſion to the throne. Love and gallantry could ſcarce be ranked among the liſt of faults, in a court ſo diſſolute and libertine as that of Catherine of Medicis. The young prince was enamoured of Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf, and equally beloved by her; and this attachment was only broken and diſſolved by the more violent paſſion which he afterwards conceived for the princeſs of Condé *.

Pius

* Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf was a Beauty of the moſt touching kind. Her name was Reneé de Rieux. She

Pius the fifth, who at this time occupied the papal chair, terrified at the intention of marrying the princess Margaret to a Huguenot, which he apprehended highly injurious to the interests of religion, and unconscious of the designs concealed beneath this alliance, refused and delayed the requisite dispensation. He even excited the young king of Portugal,

She poſſeſſed an elegance of form and manner peculiar to herſelf; and, long after her retreat from court, it was thought a very high eulogium on a young perſon, to ſay, "Qu'elle avoit de l'air de Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf."—Deſportes, the Tibullus of the ſixteenth century, celebrates her charms in many of his ſonnets, addreſſed to her under the duke of Anjou's name.—After Henry the third's return from Poland, he deſigned to have married her to the count de Brienne; but that nobleman quitted France, to avoid ſo compulſory a marriage. She became the wife of a Florentine, named Antinotti, whom ſhe afterwards killed with her own hand. Her ſecond huſband was that Altoviti, baron de Caſſelane, of whom I made mention in a former note; and who was put to death by Henry d'Angouleſme, natural ſon to Henry the ſecond.—His widow died in great obſcurity ſome years after.

the

the celebrated and unfortunate Sebastian, to demand Margaret's hand; and dispatched a nuncio into France to press her acceptance of it.—Charles excused himself, as having previously engaged his honour; but implored the legate to assure the holy Father of his filial obedience; and tenderly pressing his hands, added with warmth, "Oh! s'il m'étoit permis de m'expliquer davantage!"

Gregory the thirteenth, who succeeded Pius, having granted the dispensation, the day of the nuptials was fixed. Jane, queen of Navarre, arrived at Paris with her son and the prince of Condé; but while she was engaged in preparations for the approaching ceremony, a malignant fever with which she was attacked, put an end to her life, after five days illness.—The multitude, ever disposed to attribute the deaths of great personages to unnatural causes, supposed that poison had been used for that purpose. A perfumer, named René, who had followed the queen-mother from Florence, of which place he

was

was a native, has been accuſed as the author of this crime. It is pretended that he even avowed himſelf as ſuch, and boaſted of it publicly. Some perfumed gloves, which Jane bought of him, were ſaid to have been the medium through which the poiſon was tranſmitted. Catherine of Medicis was ſuppoſed to be the perpetrator of it—but theſe ſuſpicions are probably erroneous and ill founded. The phyſician and ſurgeon who opened her body, and who were both Hugonots, found no ſymptoms or appearances to juſtify ſuch a conjecture. On the contrary, they declared her to have expired of an abſceſs in her breaſt; and there is every reaſon to believe their depoſition *.

Coligni,

* I muſt however confeſs, that Davila aſſerts, in the moſt expreſs terms, that the queen of Navarre was poiſoned. — "The firſt blow of the tempeſt," ſays he, "fell upon Jane, whom the king and his mother "thought fit to take off. The poiſon was admini-"ſtered, *as it was reported*, in the trimming of a pair "of gloves; but in a manner ſo imperceptible, and "in ſo nice a proportion, that, after having worn "them

Coligni, yet irreſolute, dreading Catherine and Charles's treachery, and rendered

" them ſome time, ſhe was ſeized with a violent fe-
" ver, which put an end to her life in four days.—
" The Hugonots inſtantly took the alarm, and began to
" ſuſpect ſome unfair play. To eraſe from their minds
" theſe apprehenſions, the king, knowing that the
" poiſon had left no traces, except in her brain,
" ordered her body to be publicly opened. The vi-
" tals and inteſtines being found and untainted, the
" head was left untouched, under pretence of reſpect.
" The ſurgeons then declared, that ſhe died a natural
" death, cauſed by a fever."

Mezerai has ſtrengthened this report, by having ſaid, that the two perſons who opened the queen's body did not touch her head, where it was ſuppoſed the poiſon had left traces too viſible. D'Aubigné ſeems to make no queſtion of her having been taken off by unnatural means.—Voltaire, on the contrary, has taken conſiderable pains to refute theſe aſſertions. " La Chronologie Novennaire" expreſsly declares, that Caillard her phyſician, and Deſnœuds her ſurgeon, *did* diſſect her brain; which they found in a ſound ſtate.

The queen had during her whole life been ſubject to violent head-achs, attended with an itching; and ſhe expreſsly requeſted, that the cauſe of this complaint might be ſearched into; in the intention of

relieving

ed even more diſtruſtful by their careſſes, long delayed to appear at court. New artifices were employed for that purpoſe; and an open commencement of hoſtilities permitted againſt Philip the ſecond in the Netherlands, as the laſt confirmation

relieving her children, if they ſhould be attacked with the ſame diſorder.—Her deſire was complied with; and the ſurgeons diſcovered only ſome little veſicles full of water, between the brain and the membrane inveſting it; which they declared to have been the cauſe of her malady.—Catherine needs not ſuppoſitious crimes to blacken her character: Unhappily ſhe committed too many, from which it is impoſſible to juſtify her.

Davila allows Jane to have been a great and accompliſhed princeſs. He celebrates her courage, capacity, chaſtity, and magnificence: and adds, "That ſhe would have been worthy of immortal "praiſe, if ſhe had not preſumed, without ſufficient "learning, to explore the profoundeſt myſteries of di-"vinity, and pertinaciouſly adhered to the errors "of Calvin." — D'Aubigné extols her with the higheſt eulogiums. He ſays, "She had nothing "womanly about her except her ſex; a maſculine "mind, an elevated capacity, a magnanimity and "fortitude of ſoul, proof to all the ſtorms of ad-"verſity."

of the king's deſign to remain inviolably true to his paſt engagements.—Conquer'd by this conſummate piece of perfidious politics, the admiral yielded againſt his better reaſon, and arrived at Paris, accompanied by a prodigious number of the Hugonot nobility.

The prince of Conde's nuptials with Mary of Cleves, ſiſter to the ducheſs of Guiſe, were ſolemnized at the chateau of Blandi, near Melun. Thoſe of Henry, now become king of Navarre by his mother's death, were appointed for the enſuing month. Every teſtimony of the moſt reſpectful and cordial friendſhip was ſtudiouſly conferred on the Calviniſt nobles, and their leader. Every endeavour was uſed to lull aſleep their fears and ſuſpicions.

Notwithſtanding theſe demonſtrations of amity, the inhabitants of La Rochelle diſpatched repeated meſſengers, to implore Coligni not to rely on a king, violent even to fury, on a faithleſs Italian, their irreconcilable and mortal enemy. But tho'

conſcious of the danger, he remained immovable; and replied with the trueſt greatneſs of ſoul, that he would rather ſuffer himſelf to be dragged through the ſtreets of Paris, than renew the horrors of a fourth civil war, and plunge his unhappy country in new miſeries.—The marechal de Montmorenci, either more clear-ſighted, or more timid, obtained Charles's permiſſion to retire to Chantilli, under pretence of an indiſpoſition; and by that artifice ſaved both himſelf and all his family from the deſtruction intended them*.

The

* Davila ſays, that the admiral did not ſlight the ſollicitations repeatedly made him to quit the court; ſtifle any feelings of a public or patriotic nature: but, elated with the honours ſhewn him, and intoxicated with his good fortune, he declared, that Charles and his council, neither wiſhed nor dared to attempt any thing againſt him and his adherents.—It is however much more natural as well as pleaſing, to think that Coligni was influenced by motives more glorious and ſublime. The other French hiſtorians attribute ſuch to him, and we know, that Davila, though one of the greateſt writers of modern times, ſcarcely ever accounts

The nuptials of the king of Navarre with the princeſs Margaret were ſolemnized at "Notre Dame" ſoon after. The young queen was in the full bloom of her charms, and had juſt compleated her twentieth year.—In her are ſaid to have been united all the great qualities and virtues, with all the vices and defects of the family of Valois, from whence ſhe ſprung. Her perſonal beauties were captivating and excitive of love, in the moſt ſupream degree. She inſpired paſſion and deſire into the coldeſt boſoms.—Her complexion was clear and animated; her hair of the fineſt black, and her eyes

accounts for any action, or ſuppoſes it to have proceeded from diſintereſted and generous principles.

He relates an extraordinary anecdote, to prove the ſuſpicions entertained among the Hugonots, relative to the king's ſincerity. Langoiran, one of them, diſtruſting the appearance of affairs, determined at length to retire from Paris.—Coligni, when he came to take leave of him, demanded, "Why he would not remain?" "Becauſe," anſwered he, "I ſee you are too much "careſſed; and I chooſe rather to ſave myſelf with "fools, than perish with thoſe who are too wiſe."

equally full of fire and languor. Her look, ſoft, voluptuous, and tender, indicated a heart capable of the moſt melting exceſſes, of the moſt intoxicating tranſports.—Full of majeſty in her movements, and poſſeſſing, like her mother, the art of diſpoſing the ornaments of dreſs with the moſt exquiſite and conſummate taſte, ſhe announced her high birth the inſtant ſhe appeared.

Equal to the firſt Margaret of Valois in genius, in imagination, in every ſpecies of intellectual elegance, ſhe like her, was celebrated by all the poets of her time, with eulogiums the moſt impaſſioned and flattering. They addreſſed her rather as a deity than a mortal, and gave her the title of "Venus Urania," and "Celeſtis." —Her munificence, her thirſt of glory, her protection of letters, her vanity, her unbounded attachment to the pleaſures of love, were all ſtriking traits of Francis the firſt, whom ſhe intimately reſembled, and whoſe memory ſhe idolized. Courteous and affable in her manners, like her

father

father Henry the ſecond, ſhe was likewiſe of a temper yielding, flexible, and attached to favourites.

Capable of the greateſt affairs of government, but carried away by inclination, and plunged in diſſolute delights, ſhe only emerged by paroxyſms from pleaſure, and returned to it again, from an incapacity of reſiſting its allurements. Mingling devotion with debauchery, and connecting the fervours of religion with the exceſſes of luxurious diſſipation, ſhe appeared, one while, a penitent, ſtretched at the foot of the altar, and bewailing her paſt tranſgreſſions; at another, a refined voluptuary, devoted to all the delirious enchantment of epicurean wantonneſs.

An unſtudied eloquence, a graceful facility of expreſſion, more affecting than any exertions of art, characteriſed her in an eminent degree.—Hurried away by an enthuſiaſm and fire which ſhe could not reſtrain, her very virtues were carried to an extreme; her vices were not concealed even beneath the veil of decorum. En-

ſlaved by conſtitution more than paſſion, and criminal from habit rather than principle; if genius, if generoſity of ſentiment and conduct, could plead an apology for unreſtrained ſenſuality, it muſt be in the perſon of Margaret queen of Navarre *.

The moſt ſplendid entertainments and demonſtrations of joy ſucceeded to the

* Brantome has exhauſted all the powers of panegyric in her character. Thoſe which he wantonly laviſhes on her virtue, only excite laughter, but the encomiums he pays to her perſonal and intellectual beauty, ſhe certainly merited. Her aſſemblage of charms, accompliſhments, and winning qualities was unparalleled, and rendered her irreſiſtible. She ſung, and touched the lute with exquiſite delicacy.—In the dance, no lady of the court was her equal, whether in the ſerious, or the lively kind. Her perſon poſſeſſed a thouſand touching graces. Brantome enumerates them all, but it is her boſom on which he principally dwells, with uncommon complacency.—He had ſeen and admired it. "Car jamais," ſays he, "n'en fut veue "une ſi belle, ni ſi blanche, ſi pleine, ni ſi charnue, "qu'elle montroit; et ſi deſcouverte, que la plu- "part des courtiſans en mouroient: voire les dames, "que j'ai veues aucunes de ſes plus confidentes et "privées, avec ſa licence, la baiſer par un grand "raviſſement."

marriage

marriage of the king of Navarre, and were continued during ſeveral days. Amid this ſcene of feſtivity, the deteſtable plan of St. Bartholomew's maſſacre was matured, and the minute circumſtances of it arranged. The intention of Charles and the Guiſes, was only to deſtroy the Hugonots, nor had their vengeance any farther object: but it is ſaid that Catherine, hardened to the commiſſion of crimes, and more influenced by motives of ambition than of zeal, had carried her deſigns to a much more flagitious, and almoſt incredible length. The utter extermination of the Calviniſts, Guiſes, and Montmorencis, in one common carnage, is imputed to her even by the greateſt French hiſtorians: nor is even this horrible project incompatible with, or contradictory to the genius of the queen-mother, capable of framing and executing ſchemes the moſt unexampled and deteſtable.

The aſſaſſination of the admiral was determined on, as a prelude to the bloody tragedy. A man named Mourevel, ren-

dered infamous by the murder of the Seigneur de Mouy one of the Calviniſt leaders, was ſelected, as the perpetrator of this ſecond crime. He poſted himſelf therefore in a little chamber of the cloiſter of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, near which Coligni uſually paſſed, in his return from the Louvre to his own houſe. The apartment in which he was concealed, belonged to a canon of the church, who had been preceptor to the duke of Guiſe. As the admiral walked ſlowly on, employed in the peruſal of ſome papers which he held in his hand, Mourevel levelled a harquebuſſe from a window which commanded the ſtreet. It was loaded with two balls; one of which broke a finger of his right-hand, and the other lodged in his left arm, near the elbow. The aſſaſſin eſcaped inſtantly at another door of the cloiſter, and mounted a horſe provided for him by the duke of Guiſe, on which he fled *. Coligni,

* Davila's account of this infamous action, agrees almoſt in the minuteſt particulars with the one here given.

ligni, without the leaſt emotion, turning calmly towards the place from whence came the ſhot. "Le coup," ſaid he, "vient de là;" pointing with his finger to the window. His attendants immediately conveyed him home, where his wounds were dreſſed.

The king was engaged at tennis in the court of the Louvre, when this news was

given. He poſitively attributes it to Henry duke of Guiſe; who deemed himſelf juſtified, in attempting to take away the admiral's life, by the ſame means, which fame pretended this latter had formerly uſed, to aſſaſſinate Francis his father, at the ſiege of Orleans.

"Mourevel," ſays Davila, "having ſhut himſelf "up in a little room on the ground, and covered the "window, which had iron bars, with an old tattered "cloak, waited, with wondrous ſecrecy and patience, "for a convenient opportunity. On the third day, "he executed his commiſſion. One of the balls "took off the fore finger of Coligni's right hand; "the ſecond tore off the fleſh from his left elbow, "and broke the bone.—The doors of the houſe "were immediately burſt open, and all the apartments "ſearched in vain. They found only a little boy; "Mourevel having already eſcaped by the gate "St. "Antoine."

brought him. Feigning the moſt furious indignation, he threw down his racket on the ground, and inſtantly quitted the game. With loud imprecations, he denounced vengeance on the miſcreant, who had attempted the admiral's life, and named judges immediately for that purpoſe. After a haſty dinner, he went in perſon to viſit him, accompanied by the queen-mother, the duke of Guiſe, his brother Henry, and the count de Retz. About his bed were ranged the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and all the Hugonot chiefs or adherents. Charles carried his diſſimulation on this occaſion, to the greateſt pitch of hypocriſy. After general diſcourſe, he entertained Coligni near an hour in private converſation. He affected to approve, and promiſed to comply with his advice, of attacking the Spaniards in the Low-Countries. He exhauſted every art of winning blandiſhment, to obliterate the unfavourable impreſſions made on him; and puſhed his ſubtlety ſo far at this interview, that Catherine herſelf took

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the alarm, and demanded of her ſon, with anxious earneſtneſs, what advice the admiral had given him; to which the king replied, ſwearing, as was his cuſtom, that he had counſelled him to reign alone, and to be no longer governed by thoſe about him.

All this pretended concern and condolance could not however quiet the alarm of the Hugonot party. The king of Navarre and prince of Condé waited on Charles, to requeſt his permiſſion to quit Paris, in which they deemed themſelves no longer ſafe; and could ſcarcely be reſtrained by any ſupplications or entreaties, from executing their intention. The Calviniſt nobles called for inſtant puniſhment on Mourevel; and Piles, one of them, entered the palace of the Louvre, at the head of four hundred gentlemen, threatening to revenge the aſſaſſination of Coligni.

This laſt ſtep, too violent and precipitate, accelerated the maſſacre; the queen-mother having perſuaded her ſon, that he would

would be himſelf the victim of his irreſolution, and that his only ſecurity lay in preventing the Calviniſts, by deciſive and ſpeedy meaſures.—Many conſultations were held among the Hugonot leaders, reſpecting the conduct requiſite to be purſued in circumſtances ſo critical and hazardous. The Vidame of Chartres ſtrongly urged retreat; and aſſerted that it was practicable before the people were armed: but Coligni's extreme reluctance to rekindle the flame of civil war, made him determine rather to die, than leave the capital; and his ſon-in-law Teligni ſtrengthened, with all his influence, this ſentiment.

Compelled however by the numerous ſymptoms which he obſerved of the approaching danger, the Vidame renewed his ſolicitations; and inſiſted on them with more warmth, as the admiral ſeemed able to ſupport the fatigue of a removal. A gentleman, who had been preſent at this council, carried immediate intimation of their debates and intentions to the palace of the Tuilleries, where Charles had aſſembled

aſſembled his little divan, in the cabinet of his mother.

The apprehenſion of Coligni's eſcape, which muſt involve them in new and deeper embarraſſment; ſtrengthened by the harangue of the Marechal de Tavannes, his mortal and inveterate enemy, who loudly adviſed an utter and total extermination of the Hugonots, at length conquered the king's repugnance, and obtained his conſent. It is ſaid, he long heſitated on the dreadful meaſure, and recoil'd at its mercileſs conſequences: but being vanquiſhed, by the reiterated and preſſing remonſtrances of thoſe about him, he exclaimed, with his uſual imprecations, "Eh bien! puiſque il le faut, "je ne veux pas qu'il en reſte un ſeul "qui me le puiſſe reprocher."

The completion of the deſign was appointed for the ſame night; and the duke of Guiſe conſtituted chief, as being animated with peculiar deteſtation to the admiral, whom he conſidered as his father's murderer. The ſignal was to be the ſtriking of the

the great bell of the palace, on which the maſſacre ſhould inſtantly begin.

As the awful moment approached, Charles's terrors and irreſolution encreaſed.—Some principles of remaining honour, ſome ſentiments of humanity commiſeration and virtue, which all Catherine's pernicious maxims and exhortations had not been able totally to quench, yet maintained a conflict in his boſom.—His mind, torn by the agitations of contending paſſions, affected and diſordered his body.—Cold ſweats bedewed his forehead, and his whole frame unnerved, ſhook, as if under the attack of an ague. He pauſed, upon the threſhold of the enterprize. The carnage of his innocent people roſe before his imagination in all its horror—Catherine exerted every endeavour to ſupport his wavering reſolution, and ſtifle his nobler feelings. With infinite difficulty, ſhe forced from him a preciſe command for the commencement of the maſſacre; and having obtained it, dreading a relapſe in her ſon, ſhe haſtened

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the ſignal more than an hour, and gave it by the bell of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois *.

When Charles heard the dreadful knell, he was ſeized with new remorſe. It was encreaſed by the report of ſome piſtols in the ſtreet; and overcome with affright, he ſent inſtantly to command the leaders not to put the deſign in execution till further orders.—It was too late. The work of death was already begun; and the

* "At midnight," ſays d'Aubigné, "at the moment "when the maſſacre was to begin, Catherine, who "feared ſome change in the king, came into his "apartment. There were aſſembled the dukes of "Guiſe and Nevers, Birague keeper of the ſeals, "Tavannes, and the Marechal de Retz, whom Henry "duke of Anjou had conducted thither. The king "was in great emotion mingled with uncertainty: "and the queen-mother, among other arguments "which ſhe uſed to encourage him, ſaid, 'Vaut il 'pas mieux dechirer ces membres pourris que le 'ſein, de l'Egliſe, Epouſe de notre ſeigneur?' She "finiſhed by a paſſage taken from the ſermons of the "biſhop of Bitonto, 'Che pieta lor ſer crudele; che 'crudelta lor ſer pietoſa." Monſieur de Thou ſpeaks in the ſame manner of this affair.

meſſengers

meſſengers brought back word, that the people, unchained and furious, could no longer be reſtrained or withheld.

——Here I pauſe; nor ſhall attempt to unveil or deſcribe the horrors of that fatal night, engraved in characters of blood, and perpetuated by its atrocity, to times the moſt remote. The picture is beſt hidden in darkneſs, and is too horrible for human ſight.—Yet ſome particulars of it will naturally be expected; ſome minute circumſtances of Coligni's end, ſo long the ſupport of the Hugonot religion and party.

He was already retired to reſt, when the noiſe of the aſſaſſins compelled him to riſe. He apprehended immediately their intentions, and prepared, as became himſelf, for death. A German gentleman named Beſme, followed by a number of others, burſt open the door, and entered his chamber. He advanced towards the admiral, holding a long rapier in his hand. Coligni looking at him with an undiſmayed countenance, and incapable

of reſiſtance, from the late wounds he had received, only ſaid, "Young man, "reſpect theſe grey hairs, nor ſtain them "with blood!" Beſme heſitated a moment, and then plunged the weapon into his boſom. The reſt immediately threw out his body into the court, where the duke of Guiſe waited for it. He regarded it in ſilence, without offering it any injury; but Henry d'Angouleſme, who was with the duke, having wiped the face with a handkerchief, and recogniz'd the admiral's features, which were deformed and covered with blood, gave the corpſe a kick, adding, with a barbarous joy to thoſe about him——"Courage! my "friends! we have begun well: let us "finiſh in the ſame manner *."

Teligni

* Davila has related minutely, though with ſome little variation, this affecting and tragical ſtory.—"At the hour appointed," ſays he, "the duke of "Guiſe, his uncle the duke of Aumale, and Henry "d'Angouleſme, the king's natural brother, attended "by about three hundred followers, repaired to "the admiral's houſe. They were there joined by a com-

Teligni, a youth of the moſt beautiful perſon, and the moſt engaging man-

"a company of Catholic ſoldiers, whom the duke "of Anjou had ſtationed for that purpoſe, under "arms, and with their matches lighted. The gate "of the court, which was only guarded by a few "of the king of Navarre's halberdiers, they inſtantly forced; putting both them, and all the "domeſtics to death without mercy. The nobles "waited below, while La Beſme, a native of Lorrain, and immediate dependant of the duke of "Guiſe, went up to Coligni's apartment. He was "accompanied by Achille Petrucci, a Sienneſe gentleman, colonel Sarlebous, and the other ſoldiers.

"The admiral hearing a diſturbance, got up; and ſupporting his knees againſt the bed, one of his "ſervants, named Cornaſon, burſt, terrified, into the "room.—He demanded of him, 'What was the noiſe?' "To which Cornaſon haſtily replied: 'My lord, "God calls us to him;' and inſtantly ran out at "another door.—The aſſaſſins entered a moment "afterwards. Coligni addreſſing himſelf to La "Beſme, who had drawn his ſword, ſaid, 'Young "man, you ought to reverence theſe grey hairs; "but do what you think proper: my life can only "be ſhortened a very little.'—He had ſcarce ſpoke "theſe words, when La Beſme plunged the ſword into "his breaſt, and the others diſpatched him with "their daggers."

ners, who had married Coligni's daughter, was maſſacred on that night, and at the ſame time. But the fate of the count de la Rochefoucault was attended with circumſtances which excite peculiar pity.—He had ſpent the whole evening with the king at play; and Charles, touched with pity for a nobleman ſo amiable, whom he even loved, would willingly have reſcued him from the general deſtruction.—He ordered him to remain all night in his privy chamber; but the count, who apprehended that he only meant to divert himſelf at his expence, by ſome boyiſh paſtimes, refuſed, and retired to his own apartment. "I ſee," ſaid Charles, "it is "the will of God that he ſhould periſh!" When the perſons ſent to deſtroy him knocked at the door, he opened it himſelf, apprehending it to have been the king. He was inſtantly diſpatched with the daggers of the aſſaſſins, who burſt in.

The count de Guerchy, wrapping his cloak about his arm, died ſword-in-

hand, and killed ſeveral of his murderers before he fell himſelf.—Soubiſe, covered with wounds, after a long and gallant defence, was finally put to death under the queen-mother's windows. The ladies of the court, from a ſavage and horrible curioſity, went to view his naked body, disfigured and bloody.—The Marechal de Tavannes, one of the moſt violent in the execution of the maſſacre, ran through the ſtreets, crying, "Let blood! let blood! "Bleeding is equally wholeſome in the "month of Auguſt, as in the month of "May!" Even the king himſelf, forgetful of the ſacred duties which he owed to his people, and to humanity, was perſonally aiding on that night, to the barbarous extermination of his miſerable ſubjects. It is ſaid, he fired on them from the windows of his palace with a long harquebuſſe; and attempted to kill the runaways from the "Fauxbourg St. Ger-"main," who endeavoured to eſcape.

The admiral's body was treated with indignities which diſhonour human nature,

ture, and which I am even aſhamed to recite. An Italian firſt cut off his head, which was preſented to Catherine of Medicis. The populace then exhauſted all their brutal and unreſtrained fury on the trunk. They cut off the hands, after which it was left on a dunghill. In the afternoon, they took it up again, dragged it three days in the dirt, then on the banks of the Seine, and laſtly, carried it to Montfauçon. It was hung up on a gibbet by the feet with an iron chain, and a fire lighted under it, with which it was half roaſted. In this dreadful ſituation, the king went with ſeveral of his courtiers to ſurvey it; and as the corpſe ſmelt very diſagreeably, ſome of them turning away their heads, "The body of a dead enemy," ſaid Charles, "ſmells always "well!"—The remains of Coligni, after ſo many indignities, were at length taken down privately during a very dark night, by order of the Marechal de Montmorenci, and interred with the utmoſt privacy, at Chantilli.

Many accidents and cauſes conduced, notwithſtanding the rigorous orders for an univerſal ſlaughter, to reſcue numbers of the Hugonots. The king himſelf excepted two from the common deſtruction. The firſt was his ſurgeon, the celebrated Ambroſe Paré, whoſe ſuperior and uncommon ſkill proved the preſervation of his life. Charles commanded him to remain in his own wardrobe, during that dreadful night. The other perſon was his nurſe, to whom he was warmly attached, and never refuſed any requeſt.—The duke of Guiſe himſelf preſerved more than a hundred, whom he concealed during the violence of the ſtorm, in his own palace.

The Montmorencis, all which family had been inrolled in the fatal liſt, and devoted by Catherine to death, were ſecured by the departure of the Marechal, their eldeſt brother, who, it was feared, might ſeverely revenge the ſlaughter of his relations.—The tears and entreaties of Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf, prevailed on her lover the duke of Anjou to ſpare the

Marechal

Marechal de Coſſé, who was allied to her by blood.—Biron, grand maſter of the artillery, and afterwards ſo renown'd in the wars of Henry the fourth, having pointed ſeveral culverines over the gate of the arſenal, ſtopped in ſome meaſure the fury of the catholics, and afforded an aſylum to many of his friends.

The count de Montgomeri, with near an hundred gentlemen, who were lodged in the "Fauxbourg St. Germain," eſcaped on horſeback half naked, into Normandy, and eluded their mercileſs enemies.—Henry king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, were exempted from the general carnage, though not without violent debates in the council *. Charles ordered them both into his preſence, and commanded them, with horrible menaces and imprecа-

* Davila declares, that the duke of Guiſe ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to have theſe two princes included in the maſſacre; but that Charles and the queen-mother, thinking it an action ſo abominable and deteſtable to future ages, to imbrue their hands in the

imprecations, to abjure their religion, on pain of inſtant death.—The king of Navarre obeyed, but the prince obſtinately refuſed to renounce his principles. Charles, frantic with indignation, ſaid to him in three words, "Mort, Meſſe, ou Baſtile!" —This threat was effectual; and the young prince, terrified into ſubmiſſion, complied with the neceſſity of his ſituation *.

During

blood of their own relations, that no reaſons of ſtate could in any degree juſtify or authorize it, peremptorily refuſed.—He adds, that the king was peculiarly inclined to this conduct, from perſonal affection, and regard to the many virtues of Henry king of Navarre.

* The account which Margaret queen of Navarre has given us of the night of St. Bartholomew, is not only ſo authentic, but ſo highly intereſting, that I ſhall make a conſiderable extract from it.—On the evening previous to its commencement, Margaret was at the queen her mother's Coucher, who ordered her to retire.——"As I made my courteſy," ſays ſhe, "my ſiſter of Lorrain" (Claude, princeſs of France, married to the duke of Lorrain) "took hold of my "arm, and ſtopping me, burſt into tears, "My God, "ſaid ſhe, ſiſter, do not go!" which frightened me "extremely. The queen my mother perceived it; "and

During ſeven days the maſſacre did not ceaſe, though its extreme fury ſpent itſelf in

" and calling my ſiſter to her, reprehended her very " ſeverely; and forbid her to ſay any thing to me. I " ſaw plainly that they differed, but could not hear " their words. The queen commanded me a ſecond " time rudely to go to bed. My ſiſter, melting into " tears, bid me good night, without daring to ſay " any thing elſe; and I went out, all trembling and " terrified, without being able to divine what I had " to fear."

Scarce was Margaret aſleep, when a perſon came to the door, and knocking with extreme violence at it, cried out, " Navarre! Navarre!" The nurſe, who lay in her apartment, roſe immediately to open it, apprehending it to be Henry her huſband. A gentleman, named Terſan, covered with wounds, and purſued by four archers, burſt in, threw himſelf on her bed, and claſped her round the body, beſeeching her to ſave his life. She obtained it with difficulty, and ordered his wounds to be carefully dreſt.

The young queen, frightened into agonies at this horrid ſight, put on a night-gown, and ran to her ſiſter the ducheſs of Lorrain's chamber. As ſhe entered it, a gentleman, named Bourſe, was ſtabbed with a halberd, at two ſteps from her. Overcome with this ſecond barbarity, ſhe fainted into the arms of Nançay, captain of the guards. She declares in

in the two firſt. Every enormity, every profanation, every atrocious crime, which zeal, revenge, and cruel policy are capable of influencing mankind to commit, ſtain the dreadful regiſters of this unhappy period. More than five thouſand perſons of all ranks periſhed by various ſpecies of deaths. The Seine was loaded with carcaſes floating on it; and Charles fed his eyes from the windows of the Louvre, with this unnatural and abominable ſpectacle of horror. A butcher, who entered the palace during the heat of the maſſacre, boaſted to his ſovereign, baring his bloody arm, that he had diſpatched himſelf a hundred and fifty.

Catherine of Medecis, the preſiding demon who ſcattered deſtruction in ſo many

her Memoirs, that ſhe was ſprinkled all over with blood from theſe miſerable victims. Nançay informed her of the king of Navarre's ſafety, who was at that time in Charles's cloſet. She went thither, and throwing herſelf at her brother's and the queen-mother's feet, implored, and at length procured the pardon of Mioſſans and Armagnac, two Hugonots in her huſband's ſervice.

ſhapes,

ſhapes, was not melted into pity at the view of ſuch complicated and extenſive miſery. She is ſaid to have gazed with a ſavage ſatisfaction on Coligni's head, which was brought her. Some days after the ſlaughter had ceaſed, ſhe carried her ſon to the "Hotel de Ville," where Briquemaut, an old Hugonot gentleman of ſeventy-two years, and Cavagnes, maſter of requeſts, were executed in the "Place "du Greve." They had eſcaped during the carnage of their adherents, but being afterwards diſcovered, were condemned to dye. By a refinement in barbarity which impreſſes with horror, the king was deſirous of enjoying their laſt agonies. As it was night before they were conducted to the gibbet, he commanded torches to be held up to the faces of the criminals, and ſtudiouſly remarked the effects which the approach of death produced upon their features.

The admiral's effigy was likewiſe drawn upon a ſledge to the ſame place, and hung upon a gallows; nor had they forgot to

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put a toothpick into the mouth of the figure, as Coligni when alive uſually appeared with one.——The dreadful example of Paris was followed but too faithfully through all the provinces, into which ſimilar orders had been diſpatched. Some few great and exalted ſpirits, whoſe names the lateſt poſterity ſhall bleſs, refuſed to comply with ſo infamous a mandate, tho' ſigned by the king's hand, and preſerved the Hugonots from outrage in their reſpective governments *.

* In the cities of Lyons, Orleans, Rouen, Bourges, Angers, and Thouloufe, the royal orders for maſſacring the Proteſtants were moſt implicitly obeyed. In Provence, the count de Tende abſolutely refuſed to pay any ſubjection to ſo deteſtable a command; "for which," ſays Davila, "he was ſecretly diſpatched ſoon after at Avignon; and, as "commonly believed, by a commiſſion from the king." —The glorious anſwer of the viſcount d'Ortez to Charles the ninth, is never to be forgotten.—It was to this effect. "Sire, I have read the letter, enjoining a maſſacre of the Hugonots, to the inhabitants "of Bayonne. Your majeſty has many faithfully "devoted ſubjects in this city, but not one executioner."

Charles's

Charles's perplexed and contradictory conduct after the maſſacre, plainly beſpeaks his own conſciouſneſs of its infamous nature, and deteſtable principles. He firſt accuſed Henry duke of Guiſe as the ſole author and perpetrator of it, in his circular letters; and afterwards avowed himſelf as ſuch. The court, ſatiated with the ſacrifice of ſo many Hugonots, did not believe it poſſible that they could riſe again in arms, without leaders or any means of ſupport.—But this confidence deluded and deceived them.—Though covered with diſmay, and oppreſſed by ſuperior numbers, their religious zeal, which this cruel perſecution had heightened and confirmed, rendered them invincible. They ſtood on their defence in ſeveral provinces, erected anew the ſtandard of revolt, and reſiſted with ſucceſs the efforts of their victorious enemies.

La Rochelle, the grand aſylum of Calviniſm, ſhut its gates upon the royal forces, and prepared to ſuſtain itſelf, in caſe of a ſiege. The duke of Anjou was ſent

ſent at the head of a prodigious army to inveſt it, and carried with him almoſt all the nobility. The duke of Alençon, his youngeſt brother, together with the king of Navarre, and prince of Condé, were likewiſe in the camp. Catherine had even projected the diſſolution of her daughter Margaret's marriage; but the princeſs herſelf oppoſed this intention, and refuſed to conſent to it *.

There

* Margaret, in her Memoirs, has given the moſt minute relation of her mother's meaſures for procuring a divorce. She demanded of her daughter, whether Henry had conſummated the nuptials on the bridal night; and aſked her, "Si ſon mari étoit homme? "parceque ſi cela n'étoit pas, ce ſeroit un moyen de "la démarier."—The anſwer which Margaret pretends ſhe made to this queſtion, is ſuch as muſt excite laughter. She aſſured Catherine, with all the naiveté of an innocence the moſt uninformed and ſpotleſs, that "ſhe beſought her majeſty to believe that ſhe did "not underſtand what was aſked her; but that ſhe "would remain with the huſband they had given her." "Me doutant bien," adds ſhe, "que la ſeparation "n'avoit pour but, que la perte de mon mari."—It is

hard,

There are few examples in modern hiſtory of a ſiege carried on with greater vigour, or ſuſtained with more determined obſtinacy, than that of La Rochelle. In vain did the duke of Anjou blockade it on every ſide. His reiterated and bloody attacks, in which vaſt numbers of his ſoldiery fell, neither terrified the inhabitants, or diſpoſed them to capitulate. The intrigues, diſſentions, and oppoſite factions, with which the royal camp was

hard, and even ungenerous, to aſſign any other motive for this conduct in the queen of Navarre, than that of humanity, as ſhe never loved Henry during the whole courſe of her life.

That the marriage was conſummated, is a point beyond all doubt, ſince Henry himſelf avowed it, tho' the confeſſion was injurious to his intereſts. Many years after, when his divorce was ſolicited in the court of Rome, he was informed, that he had only to imitate the example ſet him by Louis the twelfth, of denying the conſummation of his nuptials. "No," ſaid Henry, "it is an aſſertion I cannot make; nor is "it credible, that a man of my conſtitution, and a "woman of the princeſs's complexion, could poſſi- "bly fail to have compleated the nuptial rites."

filled,

filled, heightened the obſtacles to his ſucceſs.

Francis duke of Alençon, youngeſt of Henry the ſecond's children, began to diſplay his character, and formed a new party in the diſtracted ſtate. In his perſon, he was little, ungraceful, and deformed. Turbulent and reſtleſs, he beheld with envious diſcontent his brother Henry's ſuperior glory, and early trophies. Anxious to eclipſe him by whatever means, and unendowed by nature with ſhining or eſtimable qualities, he united himſelf with the Hugonots and king of Navarre, to revenge the admiral's death. Irreſolute, capricious, and incapable of firmneſs on great occaſions, he ever deſerted his friends in diſtreſs. Void of faith and honour, no reliance could be repoſed on his promiſes or engagements. His rank as prince of the blood, and his perſonal courage, which was undiſputed, counterbalanced all theſe defects and vices; nor was he altogether deſtitute of gene-

rous and better feelings, which ſometimes broke out at intervals *.

His practices and connexion with the king of Navarre were ſoon divulged, and excited a great alarm at court. Charles ſent him a ſtrict prohibition to quit the camp on any pretence; and ordered the duke of Anjou to haſten by every means the reduction of La Rochelle, becauſe he wanted the troops for the protection of his own perſon.

* The duke of Alençon had connected himſelf very cloſely with Coligni previous to the maſſacre, of which he was totally innocent and uninformed. He wept his death, and appeared deeply affected by it. The queen-mother, deſirous of eraſing theſe ſentiments from his mind, cauſed a part of the admiral's journal, which had been brought her, to be read to him, in which he had ſtrongly adviſed Charles, not to give his brothers too much authority, or aſſign them a large eſtabliſhment. "See," ſaid ſhe, "what "counſel your good friend gives the king!" "I "know not," replied the duke, "whether he loved "me much; but I am convinced that none except a "man moſt faithful to his majeſty, and moſt zealous "for the ſtate, would be the author of ſuch ad-"vice."

Already

Already the miſerable king began to awake, though ſlowly, from the delirium into which his mother's fatal maxims had plunged him. The horror of St. Bartholomew's night remained indelibly impreſſed on his imagination. Remorſe, and the keen ſenſations of a heart originally undebaſed, imperceptibly conſumed him. The gaiety and complacency that uſed to characteriſe him, appeared no longer in his countenance. A fixed and melancholy gloom, which indicated the corroding pangs within, ſat upon his features. He beheld the ignominy and deteſtation with which his unparalleled barbarity and perfidy had marked him to the lateſt poſterity; nor could he diſſemble his reſentment of Catherine's abominable counſels, which had induced him to violate the ſacred laws of honour and humanity. The queen-mother having one day reproved him for his furious paſſion with ſome of his grooms, and told him, that he would do better to exert that anger againſt the rebels who cauſed the deaths of ſo

many

many faithful and loyal ſubjects before La Rochelle; he replied, "Madame, qui "en eſt cauſe que vous? Par la mort ..... "vous êtes cauſe de tout!"

While theſe ſeeds of animoſity began to generate between Charles and his mother, and while Henry exhauſted his army in ineffectual attempts upon La Rochelle, the news arrived of this latter prince's election to the crown of Poland. It was undeſired and unintended on the part of Catherine and her favourite ſon. The duke of Anjou, who ever conſidered himſelf as immediate heir to the crown, while his brother had no male iſſue by the queen, and who had from infancy been accuſtomed to the voluptuous diſſipations of the politeſt court in Europe, regarded with a ſort of horror the idea of going to reign over a barbarous people, ſo far removed from his native country. He had endeavoured by every ſecret means, to traverſe and counteract the ſucceſs of the negotiation, which was to ſet him on the Poliſh throne: but the biſhop of Valence, more

regardful of his ſovereign's orders, and his own honour, than of Catherine's or Henry's wiſhes, acted with ſo much vigour and addreſs in the Divan, that he was choſen king.—This intelligence formed an honourable pretext for withdrawing his troops, wearied and broken with ſo unſucceſsful a ſiege. Deputies were appointed on either ſide; and a general pacification was at length concluded, not only for the city of La Rochelle, but throughout the whole kingdom, on terms leſs favourable to the Hugonots, than any of the three preceding treaties.

The duke of Anjou having terminated this negotiation, embarked on the royal gallies; and landing at Nantes, proceeded along the Loire to Paris. He was every where received with royal honours. The Poliſh ambaſſadors, twelve in number, made their ſolemn entry into the capital ſoon after. The decree which elected Henry to the throne, was taken out of a ſilver box, ſealed with a hundred and ten ſeals of Prelates, Palatines, and Caſtellans,

lans. Charles, ſeated on a ſcaffold, clad in the regal robes, and accompanied by all the grandees of the court, was preſent at this ceremony. One of the ambaſſadours opened and read the decree; on which the king roſe, and embraced his brother the new ſovereign. Henry then kiſſed the duke of Alençon, and king of Navarre; after which all the noblemen of the court made him the uſual congratulations and reſpects. Catherine diſplayed all her magnificence and delicacy of taſte on this occaſion, in the ſplendid diverſions and entertainments with which ſhe honoured her ſon's acceſſion to the Poliſh diadem *.

Charles,

* Brantome has given us a minute deſcription of Catherine's banquets and exhibitions of amuſement, on the arrival of the ambaſſadours.—Sixteen ladies of the court repreſenting the ſixteen Provinces of France, habited with the moſt perfect propriety in dreſſes emblematical of their characters, formed a ballet and dance. It was performed in the palace of the Tuilleries. As far as we are able to judge, ſcarce any of Louis the fourteenth's ſuperb carouſals were ſuperior in elegance of imagination, in brilliance, or grandeur

Charles, who had embraced the firm reſolution of reigning himſelf, and adopting more ſalutary and beneficent meaſures, received with extreme ſatisfaction the news of his brother's election to a foreign throne. He had long perceived the error which his mother's counſels had induced him to commit, of entruſting to Henry ſo extenſive an authority. He beheld himſelf releaſed from a rival, who became each year more obnoxious. From impatience to ſee him gone, he haſtened his departure with a viſible anxiety and uneaſineſs: but the king of Poland protracted and delayed it, under a thouſand

of effect, to thoſe of Catherine of Medicis, ſo much earlier.

' Margaret queen of Navarre was the animating ſoul of theſe gallant diverſions. Her beauty, gaiety, wit, grace, and voluptuous air which breathed and inſpired deſire, rendered her the moſt faſcinating princeſs in the world. Laſco, one of the Poliſh embaſſy, being preſented to her, was ſo overcome with the blaze of her attractions, that he broke out into the moſt paſſionate exclamations of rapture, aſtoniſhment and homage at the ſight of ſo divine a woman.'

pre-

pretexts.—It was not only Catherine's tender and maternal fondneſs for him; it was not only the charms of a luxurious court, of a power ſcarce leſs than royal, or the expectation of the crown of France, which detained him:—A paſſion more tyrannic, more violent and inſuperable, rendered him deaf to the voice of glory, or the ſuggeſtions of reaſon. He was enamoured of the princeſs of Condé; and his heart naturally ſoft, enervate, and debaſed by effeminate pleaſures, tried in vain to exert itſelf againſt the delicious intoxication.

Mary of Cleves, married to Henry prince of Condé, was only ſeventeen years of age. She poſſeſſed attractions and perſonal beauties the moſt winning and reſiſtleſs. Her mind, improved and elegant, correſponded to her external charms; and her heart, formed to taſte the delights and exceſſes of a mutual paſſion, had not been able to reſiſt ſo accompliſhed a lover, as the hero of Jarnac and Moncontour, covered with laurels. A ſenſe of honour,

a regard to the nuptial tyes ſo lately celebrated, had long ſupported her ſliding virtue. Henry, maſter of all the wiles, which ſuch a deſign inſpires and dictates, employed the moſt ſeductive methods to obtain the gratification of his wiſhes. His ſiſter, the queen of Navarre, became ſubſervient to the poſſeſſion of his beloved miſtreſs. Even the duke of Guiſe, forgetting his natural haughtineſs, and united to the king of Poland by the cloſeſt friendſhip, did not heſitate to aid him with all his eloquence. His uncle the cardinal of Lorrain, was the firſt to perſuade and induce him to undertake this office, and procure his own ſiſter-in-law for Henry. Overcome by ſo importunate a ſuit, the princeſs yielded at length. The firſt deciſive interview between herſelf and the king took place at the Louvre; and ſhe was delivered up to him as a victim by Margaret and the duke of Guiſe *.

Amid

* Deſportes, who has immortalized the amours of the duke of Anjou with Mary of Cleves, relates this intereſting

Amid the first transporting enjoyments which succeeded; amid the delirious excesses to which the two lovers abandoned themselves, neither ambition nor any inferior duties were heard. A distant sceptre, which could only be purchased by a removal from the object of his tenderness, did not in any degree rouse the intoxicated king, or appear to him worthy the sacrifice he must make to it.—A necessity more cruel, an authority more resistless, compelled him to quicken his departure. Charles, rendered more impatient, began to menace, if he longer procrastinated it; and informed the queen-mother with his usual vehemence, that he would not permit the king of Poland's stay, and that one or other must instantly quit the kingdom.

interesting story, and describes the *decisive* interview of the lovers, in a poem called Cleophon. Henry is there named Eurilas; the princess of Condé, Olympia; Margaret of Valois, Fleur de Lys; Bussi d'Amboise, Nireus. The duke of Guise, and his mistress Madame de Sauve, are characterised under the names of Floridant and Camilla.

Henry began his preparations, and ordered all his equipage to be loaded, and attendants to be ready. Still he did not go.—The duke of Guiſe, his intimate confident, flattered him with hopes of Charles's death; and even offered, if he was determined to remain, to protect him againſt his reſentment with fifty thouſand men. Three days elapſed in this uncertainty.—Irritated at length to fury, and perſuaded that Catherine chiefly prevented the king of Poland's journey, perhaps from ſome treaſonable and dangerous intentions in his favour, Charles no longer obſerved any meaſures with his mother. He ordered the door of his cabinet to be ſhut upon her, and began to meditate more deciſive and deſperate deſigns againſt herſelf and ſon.

Theſe open marks of diſpleaſure terrified Catherine. She implored the king of Poland to delay no longer, if he regarded his own ſafety. Henry conſented, though with extreme reluctance. The whole court accompanied him; and Charles,

Charles, more from motives of circumſpection and prudence, than affection, was among the number. He could not however conduct him to the frontier, as he deſired. A ſlow fever, attended with violent giddineſs in the head, and excruciating pains about his heart and ſtomach, compelled him to ſtop at Vitry in Champagne. The queen-mother, the duke of Alençon, with the king and queen of Navarre, and a great train of nobles, continued their rout with Henry to Blamont in Lorraine. Here took place the ſeparation between him and Catherine. She held him long in her arms, unable to bid him the laſt adieu. Her ſobs and tears interrupted her voice. She loved this favourite ſon with a warmth of affection unequalled. Among the expreſſions of ſupport and comfort which ſhe uſed, to diminiſh the acuteneſs of his grief on this exile from his country; "Allez, mon fils;" ſaid ſhe, "vous n'y demeurerez pas long tems!" The ambiguity of this prediction, Charles's illneſs accompanied with extraordinary ſymptoms,

ſymptoms, the known quarrel which had preceded it, the queen-mother's partiality to the king of Poland; all theſe circumſtances gave riſe to reports and ſuſpicions of poiſon, though probably ill-founded and unjuſt.

The king's maladies were more reaſonably attributed to natural cauſes. All the French hiſtorians agree in declaring, that ever ſince the maſſacre of Paris, he had betrayed marks of diſorder, agitation, and diſtreſs. "I ſaw his majeſty," ſays Brantome, "on my return from the ſiege of "La Rochelle, and was ſtruck with the "prodigious change I obſerved in him." Beſides this concealed principle of diſeaſe, he had injured and impaired his conſtitution by too violent and laborious exerciſes. It was ſaid, that his lungs were affected by conſtantly blowing the horn at the chace. He uſed to continue at tennis five or ſix hours without intermiſſion, which extremely agitated and heated his blood. He became incapable of ſleeping except at intervals; and his ſlumbers were reſtleſs and diſordered. Theſe conjoined ſeeds of

of diſtemper conducted him apparently, though ſlowly, to the tomb, and might fully account for, and juſtify Catherine's prophetic anticipation of his end.

Henry, meanwhile, accompanied with ſeveral of the firſt nobility, and a ſuite of five hundred gentlemen, croſſed the whole Germanic empire; and arrived at Miezrich, the firſt city of his Poliſh dominions, in the depth of winter. All the princes, through whoſe territories he paſſed, endeavoured to outvie each other in the honours they paid to ſo illuſtrious a ſtranger. He was received at Cracow with every demonſtration of joy, and public feſtivity. His beautiful and majeſtic perſon, his condeſcending and courteous manners, his unbounded and profuſe liberality to all ranks of people, rendered him in the beginning almoſt idolized by his new ſubjects: but theſe external and dazzling endowments, calculated to charm at firſt view, ſoon diſappeared. He grew ſplenetic, melancholy, and reſerved.

Diſguſted with the barbarous cuſtoms

and

and character of the Poles, he was no longer eaſy of acceſs, or ſo affable towards them, as on his arrival. He remained whole days ſhut up in his cloſet, abandoned to chagrin, and depreſſed with diſquietude, at not receiving the letters he expected from France. He ſpent part of his time in peruſing the billets of the princeſs of Condé, which he kiſſed and bathed with tears. She was ever preſent to his troubled imagination, and maintained her empire over his affections. He wrote letters to her of fond attachment entirely in his own blood, and filled with proteſtations of inviolable fidelity. Deſportes the poet, who attended him to Cracow, nouriſhed his paſſion by continual ſonnets and elegies on his beloved miſtreſs. His ennui and dejection of ſpirits were ſtill more encreaſed by the diſtaſteful propoſition which the ſenate made him of marrying Anne Jagellon, ſiſter to the deceaſed monarch Sigiſmund Auguſtus, a princeſs of an unamiable perſon, and already advanced in years.

It

It was natural to ſuppoſe, that the departure of the king of Poland would tend to diffuſe a tranquillity over the court and kingdom; but Charles's reign ſeem'd deſtined to every ſpecies of civil commotion. The duke of Alençon, unquiet, and ever forming ſchemes of ambition or aggrandizement, which he afterwards abandoned from fickleneſs and irreſolution, rekindled the flame of expiring ſedition. The genius of Calviniſm, ſpringing like a phœnix from its own aſhes, re-appeared in every quarter of France; and undiſmayed by the late dreadful extermination of its votaries, animated them to new efforts againſt the government. . . . .

The king's vigour began to decay juſt as he entered the prime of life, and appeared to promiſe happier times. His capacity, naturally clear and diſcerning, made him at length ſee the train of errors and crimes, into which his youth had been led. All his actions indicated the reſolution he had taken, to govern by other and oppoſite principles from the

paſt. He applied himſelf in perſon to the affairs of ſtate. He expreſſed the moſt anxious deſire to relieve his people from the many calamities they had experienced ſince his acceſſion to the crown. In oppoſition to the advice of ſeveral of his miniſters, he diſcharged them from a third part of the taxes, and would only keep three companies of the regiment of guards about him; the reſt were diſbanded.

Though he deteſted Calviniſm and the Hugonots, he had yet determined to diſgrace and baniſh from his preſence and councils, the adviſers of maſſacre and bloodſhed. He intended to reſtore to his parliaments the adminiſtration of juſtice, as their rightful province; to repreſs and abaſe the two houſes of Guiſe and Montmorenci; and renouncing his too eager proſecution of the chace and other diſſipations, to bend his whole attention to the more important and glorious labours of a great monarch.—In vain did he form theſe ſalutary and patriotic plans.

The

The inexorable hand of death was upon him,—As if marked out by the wrath of heaven, and deſtined to pay the forfeit of St. Bartholomew's bloody night, he perceptibly and rapidly approached the end of his days, and deſcended to the tomb 'ere he had yet expiated his paſt offences.

Meanwhile the Hugonots, emboldened by the duke of Anjou's removal, and the king's languid ſtate of health, which incapacitated him for his uſual exertion of vigour, roſe again in arms. La Noue and Montgomeri in whom ſurvived the genius of Condé and Coligni, re-aſſembled their ſcattered partizans. The duke of Alençon, to whom Charles had refuſed the poſt of lieutenant-general, was privy to their enterprize. Henry king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, had promiſed to declare openly in their favour; and many noblemen of the court were ſecretly diſpoſed to join the inſurgents.—The duke of Alençon even engaged to quit the court, and put himſelf at their

head: but de Chaumont, who, with a body of cavalry, had approached the palace of St. Germain to facilitate his eſcape, as preconcerted, having miſtaken the day, and anticipated it more than a week, the prince, timid and undetermined, had not the courage to execute his convention.

La Mole, his principal favourite, conſcious that the deſign could not long remain concealed, went inſtantly and revealed the whole to the queen-mother. The court was filled with confuſion and alarm. Catherine, affecting unreal terror, with intent to render the conſpirators more odious, fled at midnight in the utmoſt diſorder, and was followed by moſt of the ladies and courtiers. Charles himſelf did not remove before the enſuing day, when he went to lodge at the "Bois de Vincennes." His brother Francis and the king of Navarre were likewiſe conducted thither, not as priſoners, but under a ſort of guard who carefully watched them. They were both examined in preſence of the king and queen-mother.

The

The firſt behaved with the meaneſt puſillanimity, trembling, and as a criminal: but Henry, intrepid and unſhaken, anſwered the interrogatories put to him, rather as an injured than a guilty perſon, and refuſed to make any confeſſion injurious to his friends or followers.

Charles's maladies, which had in ſome degree lain dormant during the winter, revived with double violence on the approach of ſpring. His brother's and the king of Navarre's unquiet practices, ſuperadded to the renewal of the civil war with the Hugonots, touched him deeply, and irritated the other diſeaſes which preyed on his enfeebled conſtitution.—"At leaſt," ſaid he, "they might have "waited for my death. It is too much "to diſtreſs me now, debilitated by "illneſs *!"

Catherine,

* It was not poſſible, ſays Brantome, to aſcertain what was the king's diſorder; ſo various and uncommon were the ſymptoms. Theſe are his own words which follow. "Car il lui ſurvint une fiévre catartique, qui tantôt "étoit

Catherine, ever attentive to her own intereſts, and foreſeeing that the king's end could not be very diſtant, with her uſual ſagacity and precaution, began to concert meaſures for ſecuring to herſelf the future regency. Her ſon's declining health, and incapacity of perſonal application to affairs, having in a degree reſtored to her that authority, of which he had previouſly determined, and even began to deprive her; ſhe exerted it to render herſelf miſtreſs of thoſe perſons, who might otherwiſe trouble and oppoſe her ſeizure of the ſupreme power, in caſe of Charles's death.

La Mole, and the Count de Coconas, an Italian nobleman, both favourites of

" étoit quarte, tantôt continue: et penſoit monſieur " Maſille, ſon premier médecin, qu'il ſe porteroit de " bien en mieux, ainſi que la fiévre diminueroit."—He adds, that the duke of Alençon and king of Navarre's colluſion with the rebels aggravated all the ſymptoms of his complaint; and that from that time his majeſty grew much worſe.—" Dont on en ſoupçonna," adds he, " quelque poiſon, enchantement, et enſorcellement."

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the duke of Alençon, were arreſted. The former denied every thing imputed to his charge, and perſiſted invariably firm: but the Count, flattered with the fallacious hope of life and a large recompence, being examined in the royal preſence, confeſſed all he knew, and even accuſed the Marechals de Montmorenci and Coſſé, as accomplices in the conſpiracy. This depoſition, though probably extorted only by the expectation of eſcaping an ignominious puniſhment, furniſhed Catherine with the pretext ſhe wanted.

A circumſtance which very ſtrongly marks the ſuperſtition of the age, (prone to the uſe of charms, and addicted to ſorcery,) ſerved to haſten the execution of La Mole and Coconas. A little image, compoſed of wax, was found in the houſe of the former; the heart of which was pierced through with a needle in many places. It was pretended that this waxen figure repreſented the king, whom La Mole had devoted to death and bewitched. He denied the imputation, and aſſerted, that

he had procured it from Cosmo Ruggieri, a Florentine, who had followed the queen-mother into France, and professed magic or divination. Ruggieri, interrogated in turn, confirmed La Mole's assurances; and added, that the intent of the amulet was to gain the affections of a lady, to whom that gentleman was devoted *.

Notwith-

* The age was infected to the greatest degree with a belief in magic, nor did this madness terminate till Louis the fourteenth's reign. Catherine was peculiarly credulous on that point. She always carried about her, cabalistical characters, written on the skin of an infant born dead. Several talismans and amulets were found in her cabinet after her death. She consulted an astrologer, on the fortunes of all her children. Favin, in his history of Navarre, relates a curious anecdote on this head. "The queen," says he, "early applied to a magician to know the destiny of "her sons. He made her see in a magic mirror, the "number of years each would reign, by the number "of turns they made. Francis the second, Charles "the ninth, and Henry the third, passed successively "in review before her. She even saw Henry duke "of Guise, who disappeared on a sudden; and Henry "the fourth, who made twenty-four turns. This "encreased

Notwithſtanding this defence, he was executed ſome days after, with the Count de Coconas, in the "Greve" at Paris. Their bodies, quartered, were placed on wheels, and their heads fixed on two poles. La Mole was peculiarly acceptable to, and beloved by the queen of Navarre, as his accomplice was by the ducheſs of Nevers: and it is confidently aſſerted by many of the cotemporary hiſtorians, that theſe two princeſſes cauſed the heads of their lovers to be taken down, on the night conſequent to their execution, and interred them with their own hands in the chapel of St. Martin *.

The

"encreaſed her hatred and averſion to the king of Na-"varre."—Coſmo Ruggieri, of whom I made mention, was ſent to the gallies; but Catherine ſoon after took him out of that ſervitude, to make uſe of the ſecrets which ſhe ſuppoſed him to poſſeſs. He died in high repute, at Paris, under Louis the thirteenth's reign, in 1615.

* Henry the fourth, in his manifeſto preſented to the pope, expreſsly aſſerts this extraordinary fact, as

The two accuſed noblemen, Montmorenci and Coſſé, either from a reliance on their own innocence, or a confidence in their rank and authority, came immediately to court, to juſtify themſelves from the ſuppoſed treaſon attributed to them: but they were committed by Catherine to the Baſtile; and the Pariſians furniſhed, with acclamations of joy, eight hundred men to prevent their eſcape. Orders were likewiſe iſſued for the arreſt of Henry prince of Condé, who, as governor of Picardy, reſided at Amiens:—but he eluded his enemies; and quitting the city in diſ-

well as the intrigue preceding it.—"The Ducheſs "of Nevers," ſays he, "being attached to the Count "de Coconas, perſuaded her friend the queen of "Navarre to commence an amour with La Mole, "their common confident," "pour lui épargner "le chagrin de garder les manteaux, pendant qu'ils "étoient enſemble."—"The connection was of "ſhort duration. The two lovers left their heads on "a ſcaffold; and their miſtreſſes, having cauſed "them to be taken down, put them in a coach, "and buried them in St. Martin's chapel, below "Montmartre."

guiſe,

guiſe, arrived ſafe at Straſbourg, where he ſolemnly abjured the Catholic religion, and made public profeſſion of Calviniſm.

In Normandy, the Hugonots, vigorouſly preſſed by the Marechal de Matignon, were almoſt every where reduced to lay down their arms. The count de Montgomeri, ſo long inured to war, and one of their greateſt chieftains, was neceſſitated to ſurrender himſelf to Matignon, who inveſted him in the town of Domfront. His life was promiſed him: but the queen-mother, who had determined to ſacrifice this victim to the manes of her huſband, diſregarded the convention, and cauſed him to be executed after the death of Charles the ninth.

The king began to ſink apace under his accumulated diſorders, which increaſed in violence and inveteracy. He long endeavoured to ſtem their attacks; but his ſtrength diminiſhing daily, at length compelled him to keep his bed, at the palace in the "Bois de Vincennes." Catherine, improving the opportunity, when her

ſon's vigour of mind began to decline under the preſſure of ſickneſs, tried to induce him to inveſt her with the regency. As long as Charles retained in any degree his uſual faculties, he perſiſted invariably to deny her this proof of his confidence; and could only be perſuaded to grant her letters to the governors of the different provinces, which injoined, that, "during his illneſs, and in caſe it pleaſed "God to diſpoſe of him, they ſhould "obey his mother till the king of Po-"land's return."

One of the moſt awful and affecting pictures, which can be held up to human ſurvey, is that of Charles the ninth expiring.—He was cut off in the flower of his age, by a death almoſt unprecedented, and accompanied with circumſtances the moſt excitive of horror and pity. During the two laſt weeks of his life, nature ſeemed to make extraordinary efforts to ſurmount the diſtemper. He trembled, and was contracted in all his limbs, by ſudden paroxyſms. His acute pains ſuf-

fered

fered him not to enjoy any repoſe, or remain in one poſture ſcarce a moment. He was bathed in his own blood, which oozed out of his pores, and at all the paſſages of his body, in prodigious quantity. His conſtitution, naturally ſound and robuſt, ſupported him ſome time, againſt the progreſs of this cruel and inſurmountable diſeaſe.

Only three days before his end, the queen-mother having informed his majeſty, that the count de Montgomeri was taken priſoner, he received the news without any mark of joy, or change of countenance. "Quoi! mon fils," ſaid ſhe, "ne vous rejouiſſez vous point de la "priſe de celui qui a tué votre pere?"—"I am no longer intereſted," anſwered the expiring prince, "about that, or any other "affair." Catherine regarded this apathy and indifference as the infallible prognoſtic of his approaching diſſolution.

On the morning of the day when he breathed his laſt, ſhe availed herſelf of this debilitated ſtate of mind, to preſs him

again

again for a nomination to the regency. He complied with her requeſt, though rather by compulſion and weakneſs, than choice; and ſhe immediately diſpatched other letters into the different parts of the kingdom, announcing the king's pleaſure.—Yet only a few hours before he expired, Charles openly gave marks of his diſapprobation with his mother. Henry king of Navarre having approached his bed, he embraced him many times; and after other demonſtrations of amity and attachment, he ſaid to him; "Je "me fie en vous de ma femme, et de ma "fille. Je vous les recommande, et Dieu "vous gardera! Mais ne vous fiez pas "à—." Catherine, fearing he was about to name herſelf, interrupted him with—"Monſieur, ne dites pas cela."—"Je le "dois dire," anſwered the dying monarch, "car c'eſt la verité."

When he found the near approaches of mortality, he prepared himſelf for it with perfect compoſure and equanimity of mind. He ordered the duke of Alençon

and

and king of Navarre into his preſence. Birague the chancellor, Monſieur de Sauve ſecretary of ſtate, and the Cardinal of Bourbon, with ſeveral other nobles, were admitted.—He addreſſed himſelf to them, with the earneſtneſs of a perſon about to quit the world. He declared his brother, the king of Poland, ſucceſſor to the crown, the Salic law excluding his only child, a daughter, from the throne. He implored the duke of Alençon not to moleſt, or attempt to impede his elder brother's entry into the kingdom; and obliged all preſent to take the oath of allegiance to the abſent ſovereign, and of obedience to Catherine, 'till his arrival.

He commanded the Viſcount d'Auchy, captain of the guards, to look well to his charge, and to preſerve his unſhaken loyalty to the king of Poland. He requeſted Poquenot, lieutenant of the Swiſs guards, to make his dying recommendations to his allies the thirteen Cantons. Above all, he charged Monſieur de la Tour, maſter of his wardrobe, to carry his tender

der and conſtant remembrances to his miſtreſs, the beautiful Mary Touchet, whom he had long loved.—Theſe duties performed, he fell into an extreme weakneſs, and yielded his laſt breath about three o'clock in the afternoon. He wanted only thirty-one days, to have accompliſhed his twenty-fifth year *.

The reports of poiſon were again renewed, and Catherine of Medicis was accuſed of her ſon's death: but from this horrible and unnatural crime an impartial juſtice muſt acquit her †.

Charles

* Brantome has furniſhed me with ſeveral circumſtances relative to the illneſs and death of Charles the ninth. He was in the court at that time. Theſe are his words.— "Il mourut le propre jour de la Pen-"tecoſte, l'an 1574, trois heures après midi, ſur le "point que les médecins et chirurgiens, et tous ceux "de la cour le penſoient ſe mieux porter: car le jour "avant il ſe portoit bien; et nous croyions qu'il s'en "alloit guery; mais nous donnames de garde que ſur "le matin il commença à ſentir la mort, laquelle "il fit très belle et digne d'un grand Roi."

† It may be curious, however, to enter a little into this diſquiſition. Moſt of the writers of that period make

Charles left by his queen only one legitimate daughter, named Mary-Elizabeth, who

make mention of the ſuſpicion, but in general exculpate the queen-mother, and pronounce her guiltleſs. So abominable an action, if true, would probably have been authenticated and handed down to us by ſome inconteſtable authority. Davila never once hints poiſon; but expreſsly attributes his death to "an illneſs "occaſioned by too great exerciſe in running, hunting, wreſtling, and riding the great horſe; of all "which recreations he was immoderately fond."—In another place he ſays, "The king's life was now "haſtening faſt to its period. He had begun to ſpit "blood ſome months before; and being exhauſted "with a flow, continued, internal fever, he had entirely loſt his ſtrength."—He recounts the particulars of his calling into his chamber the princes and great officers of ſtate, previous to his death—and adds, that "Charles having diſmiſſed all preſent, with "weighty and affecting admonitions, ſtill continued "to hold his mother's hand faſt in his own, and in that "poſture ended the courſe of his troubleſome reign."—The very act in which he expired, ſeems to indicate filial piety and affection. Even Henry Etienne, a violent declaimer againſt Catherine of Medicis, and who accuſes her of many murders, makes no mention of, nor imputes to her that of Charles.

Monſieur de Thou heſitates, and leaves it undecided; yet I muſt own he rather ſeems to hint poiſon

as

who ſurvived him about four years. His widow, Elizabeth of Auſtria, retired ſoon after

as the cauſe of the king's death, and charges indirectly the queen his mother. He adds, that on the opening of his body ſpots were found in many parts; "Ex "cauſa incognita, reperti livores."—Brantome denies this aſſertion. He poſitively declares, that no marks of violence were diſcoverable on the king's body.—"Le jour enſuivant ſon corps fut ouvert en preſence "du magiſtrat, et n'y ayant été trouvé au dedans au- "cune meurtriſſeure ny tache, cela oſta publique- "ment l'opinion que l'on avoit de la poiſon." He adds, that Monſieur de Strozzi and himſelf demanded of Ambroſe Paré, the king's ſurgeon, to what cauſe he imputed his death? who replied, that "he had "deſtroyed his lungs and vitals, by conſtantly and "immoderately blowing the horn." A moment after, however, he talks of poiſon.—"Si eſt ce qu'on "ne ſcauroit oſter aucuns d'opinion qu'il ne fut em- "poiſonné, des que ſon frere partit pour Pologne, et "diſoit on que c'étoit de la poudre de corne d'un "lievre marin, qui fait languir long tems la perſonne, "et puis après peu à peu s'en va, et s'eteint comme une "chandelle. Ceux qu'on en a ſoupçonné autheurs, "n'ont pas fait meilleure fin." Theſe are Brantome's words.

The Marechal de Baſſompiere ſays, that having one day told Louis the thirteenth, that Charles the ninth had broke a vein in his lungs by blowing the horn, which

after into her father the emperor Maximilian's dominions, and died in retreat, at Prague.——By his miſtreſs, Mary Touchet, he had one ſon, Charles, grand Prior of France, Duke of Angouleſme, and Count de Ponthieu; well known by his treaſonable connections with the duke of Biron, under Henry the fourth's reign.

There is perhaps no character in hiſtory, upon which we ſhould decide with ſo much candour and benignity, as on that of Charles the ninth.—Educated in a corrupt and vicious court, under Catherine of Medicis's pernicious counſels, all the noble ſeeds of virtue and kingly greatneſs, with

which cauſed his death; the king replied, that he would not have died ſo ſoon, if he had not drawn on himſelf his mother Catherine's reſentment, and been ſo imprudent as to truſt himſelf near her, at the Marechal de Retz's perſuaſion.——Catherine was ſo conſcious that her ſon's death was imputed to her by the people, that ſhe thought it neceſſary to inform the governors of the provinces of all the circumſtances of his diſorder, with intent to vindicate herſelf from the ſuſpicions univerſally received and cheriſhed againſt her.

which

which nature had liberally endow'd him, were extinguiſhed, or perverted into deſtructive and furious paſſions. In genius, in diſcernment and capacity, he was not inferior to Francis the firſt. He poſſeſſed a comprehenſive and retentive memory, an energy of expreſſion and force of eloquence the moſt happy, an incredible activity perſonal and intellectual. Of deep and keen penetration, he knew the human heart, and piqued himſelf on his ſkill in pervading its feelings, through the cloſeſt diſguiſe.

No prince of the houſe of Valois excelled him in intrepidity and courage. His munificence was truly royal, becauſe univerſal, unlimited, and impartial; not confined to favourites and paraſites, like Henry the third, his brother's. With intent to prevent him from application to affairs of ſtate, thoſe about his perſon endeavoured to throw him into debauches of wine and women. To the latter he was little addicted; and having once perceived that intoxication had ſo far

diſturbed his reaſon, as to induce him to commit ſome actions of violence and indecorum, he never could be perſuaded to engage a ſecond time in drunken feſtivity, and carefully abſtained from any exceſs during the remainder of his life. "Princeps præclara indole, et magnis virtutibus," ſays Monſieur de Thou, "niſi quatenus eas prava educatione et matris indulgentia corrupit."

Amid all the horrors with which the ſad annals of his reign abound; in the midſt of maſſacres and commotions, he yet cultivated with aſſiduity the humanizing arts and politer ſtudies of a liberal mind. He took a peculiar pleaſure in the company of learned and ingenious men, in a ſelect company of whom he often unbent himſelf, and held a ſort of academy. He poſſeſſed an eaſy vein of poetry, and ſome of his compoſitions in verſe yet remain, which do honour to his genius.—With talents ſo comprehenſive and various, he would doubtleſs under other tuition, have been ranked amongſt the greateſt

monarchs whom France has ſeen reign. His vices and crimes are evidently the reſult of miſguided youth, and paſſions naturally impetuous. Over the maſſacre of Paris, a mind tinctured with compaſſion for human error and weakneſs, will draw a veil. To his mother, and to his evil counſellors, that deed of ſanguinary and abominable revenge is to be juſtly attributed *.

In his perſon he was tall, and finely ſhaped. He ſtooped in his walk, and his head uſually leaned on one ſide a little,

* Brantome, who freely and fully enumerates Charles's vices, and ſpeaks in terms of deteſtation of the maſſacre of Paris, yet exculpates him on account of his unripe youth, his unprincipled preceptors, and the general corruption of the whole court. I much admire the paſſage. It breathes a generoſity and candour of ſentiment. "J'ai veu pluſieurs s'etonner," ſays Brantome, "que veu la corruption de ſon regne, "et depuis la perte qu'il fit de monſieur de Sipierre, "qui le nouriſſoit ſi bien, comme il fut ſi magna-"nime, ſi genereux, vertueux, valeureux, et liberal, "comme il a eté. Car il a autant etendu ſa libera-"lité que fit jamais roi, à toutes ſortes de gens."

His

His complexion was pale, his hair of a deep black, his nose aquiline, and his regard keen and penetrating. His neck was long and slender, his chest raised, and all his limbs justly proportioned, except his legs which were rather too big. He excelled in every martial or corporal exercise, and rode the horse with distinguished grace and address. Of hunting he was immoderately fond, and pursued it to the injury of his health and constitution. The Marechal de Retz, and those who presided over his education, had so accustomed him to the habit of swearing, that he mingled oaths and imprecations in his common discourse.

Cut off by an immature and miserable death, just as he began to emerge from the horrid abyss of guilt and infamy, into which a deference to his mother's advice had plunged him; and scarce known but as the perpetrator of St. Bartholomew's fatal carnage; posterity have surveyed the picture of his reign with detestation rather

than pity, and condemned him too ſeverely for errors not his own.—I do not mean to become his apologiſt or panegyriſt. The true character of Charles the ninth is too well known to all Europe, at this diſtance of time, to admit the poſſibility of throwing many new lights on it, or altering materially the ſuffrage of mankind. Commiſeration for a prince, evidently the victim of a pernicious ſyſtem of politics, and cover'd with the odium of imputed enormities;—the ſatisfaction we feel in attempting to ſnatch from ignominy a character not originally debaſed;—the impartiality which every writer ſhould cultivate and encourage;—theſe ſentiments alone have induced me to depicture Charles the ninth, in a different light from that in which he has generally been repreſented, by all the Engliſh hiſtorians.

The ſame indecent neglect which had been ſhewn to the funerals of Francis the ſecond, characteriſed thoſe of Charles; and, ſome diſputes relative to precedence

ariſing

arising among the nobility who attended the proceſſion, his body was quitted between Paris and St. Denis, and conducted, without pomp or any regal ſtate, to the tomb of his anceſtors *.

The reign of Henry the third yet remains, to conclude the ſeries of princes, whoſe lives, when I began theſe Memoirs, I intended to have written. As laſt of the family of Valois, his death, by which the

* Brantome was himſelf, as a gentleman of the bed-chamber, one of the very few who accompanied his royal maſter's body, and ſaw it depoſited at St. Denis.—"Le corps du Roi fut quitté," ſays he, "eſtant à "l'egliſe de St. Lazare, de tout le grand convoy, "tant des princes, ſeigneurs, cour de parlement, et "ceux de l'egliſe et de la ville; et ne fut ſuivy et "accompagné que du pauvre Monſieur de Arozze, de "Funcel, et moi, et de deux autres gentilhommes de "la chambre, qui ne voulusmes jamais abandonner "notre maître, tant qu'il ſeroit ſur terre. Il y avoit "auſſi quelques archers de la garde. Choſe qui "faiſoit grand pitié à voir!"—A dreadful fatality ſeems to have accompanied this unhappy prince; and the continual diſſentions which marked his reign, attended him even after death.

crown deſcended to the houſe of Bourbon, forms a great and ſignal epocha in the annals of France. It even ſeems wanting to complete the piece, and conſtituted originally a part of my plan. But that languor and laſſitude of mind, which we naturally experience after any continued application or exertion of our faculties to one object, muſt be my apology. If theſe Memoirs, the production of leiſure and a fondneſs for hiſtorical knowledge, ſhall conduce to entertain or amuſe, I may reſume the ſubject in ſome future time.

Though my ſole deſign has been to excite attention, by a lively delineation rather of men and manners, than kings and political events; yet, in no character or narration have I willingly or knowingly ſacrificed truth to imagination, or added fictitious colours to thoſe of nature and reality. I have even endeavoured carefully to repreſs any luxuriance, unbecoming or inconſiſtent with the ſacred veracity due to hiſtorical facts; nor have

wiſhed to affix more odium to the name of Louis the eleventh, or confer more eulogium on Francis the firſt, than I apprehend them diſpaſſionately to have merited.

END OF THE MEMOIRS.

A

TOUR

THROUGH THE

WESTERN, SOUTHERN, AND INTERIOR

PROVINCES OF FRANCE.

3

A TOUR, &c.

Carenten in Low Normandy,
Saturday, 26th Auguſt, 1775.

YOU ſhall be obeyed, my dear Sir; and I prepare myſelf with pleaſure, to give you the ſame minute narration of the events which diverſify my preſent tour, as I did in my laſt round the Baltic.

I landed in this kingdom, at Cherbourg, laſt Wedneſday evening. The ruins of the pier which was demoliſhed by our troops in the late war, preſent a mournful picture of devaſtation, as they ſtill remain exactly in the ſtate they were left on the re-embarkation of the Engliſh in 1758. The town itſelf impreſſes with no higher ideas of opulence or commerce.

It

It is a wretched collection of houſes crouded together in a ſandy valley cloſe to the ſhore; dirty, irregular, and mean. The ſituation, in the center of the channel, and between the two Capes of Barfleur and La Hogue, has alone made it always important in the eye of policy.

If Havre de Grace has been ever eſteemed the key of High Normandy, Cherbourg is equally ſo of the Lower. During the many reigns in which it was ſubject to the Engliſh government, our princes appear to have been ſenſible of its full value. They often landed there, when called over by revolts of their barons or ſubjects; and we find the Norman princes, who frequently reſided at Wincheſter, uſually embarking for this port, in preference to any other. A very ſtrong garriſon was generally maintained in it; and Charles the ſeventh terminated his long train of victories over the timid and divided counſels of our Henry the ſixth, by this important conqueſt. It was re-annexed to the crown of France in 1450.—I am ſurprized to find

that

that the miniſtry have never fortified this city. Charles the Bad, king of Navarre, into whoſe hands it was ſequeſtered in the fifteenth century, ſurrounded it with walls in the gothic ſtyle of defence, which remained till Louis the fourteenth's reign, who diſmantled it, in the intention of erecting new ones; but the Marquis de Barbeſieux, who was then his miniſter, found other more preſſing calls for the public money, in the wars which opened the preſent century, and ſhook his maſter's throne.

About half a mile from the town is a cliff or rock of prodigious heighth. I aſcended it by a long winding path, acroſs the adjoining mountain. On the top I found a little convent of Benedictine monks, or hermits — for ſo they term themſelves — who have choſen to quit the vale below, and retired to the bleak ſummit, cultivate a few acres of ground ſterile and ſtony, from which they procure with difficulty a miſerable ſubſiſtance. One of them, the Superior, after having

ſhewn

ſhewn me the little chapel and refectoire, led me to the extreme point of the cliff, on which ſtands a crucifix. "This," ſaid he, "is the ſpot, from whence John King "of England is ſaid to have thrown his "nephew, prince Arthur of Bretagne. "Tradition reports, that he perpetrated "it with his own hand, in a tempeſtuous "night; and that the ſea, which, though "now expelled, then waſhed the foot of "the rock, received the body of the un-"happy prince."—You remember, no doubt, perfectly this part of the Engliſh hiſtory. It is, however, a very diſputable circumſtance, and there is ſcarce any illuſtrious death more concealed from the public knowledge, than that in queſtion. It is certain that prince Arthur, after having been conducted through ſeveral provinces, with ignominy, by his uncle, finally diſappeared in 1203.—But ſo far are hiſtorians from poſitively aſcertaining the time or manner of his exit, that they diſagree in the place of his confinement, previous to that event; and whether he

was

was imprisoned in the castle of Rouen, Falaise, or in that of Charbourg—for these three are all named—we are not able precisely to determine.

There is another vestige of our English monarchs yet in being, which stands on incontestable authority, and can plead more than mere tradition. To the westward of the town, about a mile distant, a little rivulet empties itself into the sea. It is called the "Chantereine." In a meadow, a few paces from the shore, stands a small chapel, which was built by Matilda, daughter of Henry the first, and mother of Henry the second. History relates, that in the reign of Stephen, who usurped the throne, she passed over from Wareham into Normandy, to raise fresh forces in support of her claim. Being attacked by a violent tempest at sea, she had recourse to the same means which Philip the second used at St. Quintin, and Clement the seventh at the sack of Rome, to avert the danger—I mean prayers. It does not appear that she implored the Deity,

or

or even Jeſus Chriſt; but, repoſing her whole hope in the immaculate Virgin, ſhe made a vow, that if ſhe ever ſet her foot again on land, ſhe would ſing a hymn to the Virgin on the ſpot where ſhe alighted. Her vows were accepted; the ſtorm abated; and ſhe arrived happily. The inſtant ſhe got on ſhore, one of the ſailors reminded her of her promiſe, in theſe words; "Chante, reine, vechi terre!" and as it was exactly at the mouth of this rivulet, the exclamation gave riſe to the name it bears to this day. Not content with ſo ſimple a mark of her gratitude, ſhe erected the chapel, of which I ſpoke, which is called "Notre Dame du vœu." I went into it. The ſtory is recorded at length. The architecture bears every mark of extreme rudeneſs and barbariſm, ſuch as characteriſed the age in which it was built. Six centuries, which have elapſed ſince its conſtruction, have looſened the ſtones which compoſe it, and begin to threaten its demolition. As I went out, I remarked an iron box, apparently coeval with the

chapel; and over it, on the wall, in characters almoſt eraſed, was a little inſcription, ſignifying, that it was intended for charitable donations towards repairing "Our Lady du Vœu."—How could I withſtand ſo forcible a requeſt from a ſovereign? I let fall a bit of money into the box, and went away.

Cherbourg pretends to very high antiquity. It is ſaid to have been originally called Cæſarbourg. Richard the ſecond, duke of Normandy, and uncle to William the Conqueror, erected a ſtrong caſtle here, and having come in perſon to view it, was ſo pleaſed with the apparent importance of the place for the conſervation of his duchy, that he exclaimed in a rapture, "Ly caſtel eſt un cher bourg per "mi!" This trifling circumſtance was the origin of its preſent name. Coins of ſeveral Roman emperors have been dug up here at different times; and a gentleman ſhewed me one, in fine preſervation, of Antoninus Pius, found only a few years ſince. Other traditions confirm this

fact; and the beautiful "Val-de-Saire," which lies in the eaſtern part of the Coutentin, near Cape Barfleur, is ſaid to be a corruption of "Val-de-Ceres," which it was called by the Romans, in honour of that goddeſs, from its extraordinary fertility.

I left Cherbourg yeſterday morning, and after dining at Valognes, a conſiderable town, arrived here laſt night. I would have proceeded for Coutances this morning, but Madame Clotide's marriage with the prince de Piedmont has left the provinces without horſes, as they are ordered to Paris, to convey the princeſs and her ſuite to Turin. I am therefore under the neceſſity of ſtaying till to-morrow; and, for want of other amuſement, I have wandered over this place, and its environs.

The town is ſmall, but the ruins of the caſtle are very beautiful. It is celebrated in the civil wars under Charles the ninth, and in thoſe of the League, which followed, in the reigns of Henry the

the third and fourth. The architecture of the great church is elegant, it having been erected in the fifteenth century, when the Gothic ſtructures had almoſt attained to their higheſt point of beauty and perfection. There was nothing in the inſide which merited attention, except an altar, and a painting dedicated to St. Cæcilia. The ſweet ſaint appears playing on a ſort of harpſichord, her fingers ſinking negligently into the keys. A blue mantle looſely buckled over her ſhoulder expoſes part of her neck to view, and her fair hair floats down her back. The pupils of her eyes are thrown up to heaven in a fine frenzy of muſical enthuſiaſm.—If there were many ſuch canonized beauties in the Romiſh calendar, it would be a dangerous religion. The heart erects altars to them without the aid of piety.

I ſhall continue my remarks as I proceed.

Coutances, Monday, 28th Auguſt, 1775.

IT is only ſix leagues from Carenten to this city; but the road, even at this ſeaſon of the year, is ſo bad, that thoſe of Weſtphalia and Brandenburgh are fine in compariſon. The roads of Low Normandy are infamous to a proverb; and I ſhould never have had the boldneſs to venture through them, if I had been previouſly acquainted with their nature. Coutances has, however, in ſome degree, made amends for the difficulties I found in arriving at it, and repaid me by the objects it affords of entertainment. It was founded by the Romans, who eſtabliſhed a legion here, and called it "Caſtra "Conſtantia." They fortified it with very ſtrong walls, which exiſted till Louis the eleventh's reign; who demoliſhed them, becauſe the place, being part of the domain of his brother Charles, refuſed to admit a royal garriſon. It ſtands on a hill, the ſides of which deſcend with pro-

digious rapidity. Beyond the vale, a range of hills riſes like a ſuperb amphitheatre, and inveſts it on every ſide. The houſes bear all the marks of antiquity in their ſtructure and taſte, which is rude to a great degree. Many of them have doubtleſs ſtood five or ſix hundred years; and on one, the ſtyle of which merits peculiar ſtudy, is the date 1007 yet remaining in very legible characters.

On the ſummit of the hill, in the center of the town, ſtands the cathedral. I have ſpent ſeveral hours in the examination of its architecture. There is a groteſque beauty ſpread over the whole; and the fantaſtic ornaments of Gothic building are mingled with a wondrous delicacy and elegance in many of its parts. It was begun in 1047; and William the Conqueror, king of England, aſſiſted in perſon at its ſolemn conſecration ſome years after. I went up to the top of the great center tower, to enjoy one of the fineſt proſpects imaginable. The town of Granville appears in front, and beyond it the iſlands

of Chauſey. Jerſey, at the diſtance of ſeven leagues to the north, forms a noble object. The country on all ſides, towards St. Lo, Avranches, and Carenten, is a garden, rich, cultivated, and ſhaded with woods. They ſay that a certain barbarous monk, named St. Ereptiole, founded this ſee as early as the year 430, in the emperor Theodoſius the ſecond's reign, and under the papacy of Celeſtine the firſt.—Henry the fifth took the city in the year 1418, after a ſhort ſiege; but it returned to the crown of France under the declining power of the houſe of Lancaſter.

Coutances is large, but the convents form a conſiderable part of its ſize, and the religious of different orders, a great part of its inhabitants. As it is two leagues diſtant from the ſea, and has not any navigable river, there is no commerce; but ſome few provincial nobleſſe reſide in it.

I am charmed with the Coutentin: all this part of Low Normandy is ſo called. From Cherbourg to Valognes, it was

mountainous and heathy; but in general the country is inferior to no part of the north of Europe. Fine acclivities cloathed with wood, and rich vallies covered with harveſts, form a moſt pleaſing ſcene. There is notwithſtanding an apparent penury and naſtineſs in the dwellings of the people. The hand of oppreſſion is viſible in their habit, their hovels, their appearance. I ſaw none of thoſe neat and pretty peaſants ſo common in our moſt ſecluded villages.

The Coutentin has given birth to ſome illuſtrious men. Thoſe brave and romantic heroes ſo famous in ancient ſtory, Tancred, and Robert Guiſcard—who, after having expelled the Saracens from Apulia and Calabria, founded the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, which they tranſmitted to their deſcendants—were Counts of Hauteville, a little town not far from Valognes. Hiſtory informs us, that Robert duke of Normandy, and ſon to the Conqueror, the moſt generous and the moſt neceſſitous prince of

his age, mortgaged this part of his dominions to his brother Rufus, previous to his voyage to the Holy Land. The ſum, if I remember right, which he received, was only ten thouſand marks, which the rapacious Rufus levied on his Engliſh ſubjects.

You ſee I call in hiſtory or tradition to my aſſiſtance every moment. Indeed it is impoſſible to travel through this duchy, where our ancient monarchs held their ſo frequent reſidence, without being reminded continually of ſome of thoſe anecdotes tranſmitted to us reſpecting them. Adieu!

In the evening I proceed to Granville,

Granville, Wedneſday, 30th Auguſt, 1775.

THERE is perhaps no pleaſure greater, than that of communicating pleaſure received; and, as admiration is one of the moſt elegant and intereſting ſources from which it can be drawn, we uſually liſten with extreme readineſs to any addreſſes made to that paſſion. I wiſh to prepare you for a recital, in which the marvellous and the aſtoniſhing may predominate; though you may do me the juſtice to believe, they will ever be under the guidance of truth.

Superſtition, the parent of a thouſand evils to mankind, has yet given riſe to ſuch extraordinary and magnificent productions in every age, as almoſt incline one to pardon her crimes and follies. I am juſt returned from the ſurvey of one of the firſt of theſe; and ſhall endeavour to addreſs my imperfect deſcription of it to your heart and affections.

I left Coutances Monday evening. The diſtance

diſtance to this town is only ſix leagues, through a continuation of the ſame agreeable country which I have already painted to you. Deſirous to viſit the celebrated "Mont St. Michel," I hired two horſes, and ſet out early yeſterday morning. It is about twenty miles from Granville, and the road lying along the ſea-ſhore, renders it very pleaſant. I got to Genet, a little village, before noon. From hence it is only a league to the Mount; but as it lies entirely acroſs the ſands, which are only paſſable at low tide, it becomes indiſpenſably requiſite to procure a guide. I did ſo, and arrived there at one in the afternoon.

This extraordinary rock—for it is no more—riſes in the middle of the bay of Avranches. Nature has completely fortified one ſide, by its craggy and almoſt perpendicular deſcent, which renders it impracticable for courage or addreſs, however conſummate, to ſcale or mount it. The other parts are ſurrounded by walls fenced with ſemilunar towers in the Gothic manner;

but

but ſufficiently ſtrong, ſuperadded to the advantages of its ſituation, to deſpiſe all attack. At the foot of the mountain, begins a ſtreet or town, which winds round its baſe to a conſiderable heighth. Above, are chambers where priſoners of ſtate are kept, and other buildings intended for reſidence; and on the ſummit is erected the abbey itſelf, occupying a prodigious ſpace of ground, and of a ſtrength and ſolidity equal to its enormous ſize; ſince it has ſtood all the ſtorms of Heaven, in this elevated and expoſed ſituation, during many centuries. —I ſpent the whole afternoon in the different parts of this edifice; and as the Swiſs who conducted me through them, found he could not gratify my curioſity too minutely, he left no apartment or chamber unſeen.

The "Sale de Chevalerie," or knights' hall, reminded me of that at Marienbourg in Poliſh Pruſſia. It is equally ſpacious; but more barbarous and rude, becauſe ſome hundred years prior in its erection.

Here

Here the knights of St. Michael uſed to meet in ſolemn convocation on important occaſions. They were the defenders and guardians of this mountain and abbey, as thoſe of the temple, and of St. John of Jeruſalem, were to the holy ſepulchre. —At one end is a painting of the archangel, the patron of their order; and in this hall Louis the eleventh firſt inſtituted, and inveſted with the inſignia of knighthood, the chevaliers of the croſs of St. Michael.

We paſſed on through ſeveral leſſer rooms into a long paſſage, on one ſide of which the Swiſs opened a door, and through a narrow entrance, perfectly dark, he led me, by a ſecond door, into an apartment, or dungeon—for it rather merited the latter than the former appellation—in the middle of which ſtood a cage. It was compoſed of prodigious wooden bars; and the wicket which admitted into it was ten or twelve inches in thickneſs. I went into the inſide: the ſpace it compriſed was about twelve feet

ſquare,

ſquare, or fourteen; and it might be nearly twenty in heighth. This was the abode of many eminent victims in former ages, whoſe names and miſeries are now obliterated and forgotten.

"There was," ſaid my conductor, "towards the latter end of the laſt century, a certain news-writer in Holland, who had preſumed to print ſome very ſevere and ſarcaſtic reflections on Madame de Maintenon, and Louis the fourteenth. Some months after he was induced, by a perſon ſent expreſſy for that purpoſe, to make a tour into French Flanders. The inſtant he had quitted the Dutch territories, he was put under arreſt, and immediately, by his majeſty's expreſs command, conducted to this place. They ſhut him up in this cage. Here he lived upwards of three-and-twenty years; and here he, at length, expired. —— During the long nights of winter," continued the man, "no candle or fire was allowed him. He was not permitted to have

"any

"any book. He ſaw no human face ex-
"cept the gaoler, who came once every
"day to preſent him, through a hole in
"the wicket, his little portion of bread
"and wine. No inſtrument was given
"him, with which he could deſtroy him-
"ſelf; but he found means at length to
"draw out a nail from the wood, with
"which he cut or engraved, on the bars
"of his cage, certain fleurs de lis, and
"armorial bearings, which formed his
"only employment and recreation."—
Theſe I ſaw, and they are indeed very curiouſly performed, with ſo rude a tool.

As I ſtood within this dreadful engine, my heart ſunk within me. I execrated the vengeance of the prince, who, for ſuch a treſpaſs, could inflict ſo diſproportionate and tremendous a puniſhment. I thought the towers and pinnacles of the abbey ſeemed to ſhake, as conſcious of the cruelty committed in their gloomy round; and I haſtened out of this ſad apartment, impreſſed with feelings of the deepeſt pity and indignation.

"It

"It is now fifteen years," ſaid the Swiſs, "ſince a gentleman terminated his days "in that cage; it was before I came to "reſide here: but there is one inſtance "within my own memory. Monſieur de "F——, a perſon of rank, was con-"ducted here by command of the late "king; he remained three years ſhut up "in it. I fed him myſelf every day; but "he was allowed books and candle to di-"vert his miſery; and at length, the "abbot, touched with his deplorable ca-"lamities, requeſted and obtained the "royal pardon. He was ſet free, and is "now alive in France.

"The ſubterranean chambers," added he, "in this mountain, are ſo numerous, "that we know them not ourſelves. "There are certain dungeons, called "Oubliettes," into which they were ac-"cuſtomed anciently to let down malefac-"tors guilty of very heinous crimes: they "provided them with a loaf of bread and "a bottle of wine; and then they were "totally forgotten, and left to periſh by

"hunger

" hunger in the dark vaults of the rock. " This punishment has not however been " inflicted by any king in the last or " present century."

We continued our progress through the abbey. He led me into a chamber, in one corner of which was a kind of window; between this and the wall of the building was a very deep space or hollow of near a hundred feet perpendicular, and at bottom, was another window, opening to the sea. It is called " The hole of Montgomeri." The history of it is this.——You will recollect, that in the year 1559, Henry the second, king of France, was unfortunately killed at a tournament by the Count de Montgomeri. It was not intended on that nobleman's part; and he was forced, contrary to his inclination, to push the lance against his sovereign, by his express command. He was a Hugonot, and, having escaped the massacre of Paris and Coligni, made head against the royal forces in Normandy, supported by our Elizabeth with arms and money. Being driven from his

his fortreſſes in thoſe parts, he retired to a rock, called the "Tombelaine." This is another, ſimilar to the "Mont St. Mi-" chel," only three quarters of a league diſtant from it, and of nearly equal dimenſions. At that time there was a caſtle on it, afterwards demoliſhed, and of which ſcarce any veſtiges now remain. From this faſtneſs, only acceſſible at low tides, he continually made excurſions, and annoyed the enemy, who never dared to attack him. He coined money, laid all the adjacent country under contribution, and rendered himſelf univerſally dreaded. Deſirous however to ſurprize the "Mont St. Michel," he found means to engage one of the monks reſident in the abbey, who promiſed to give him the ſignal for his enterprize, by diſplaying a handkerchief. The treacherous monk having made the ſignal, betrayed him, and armed all his aſſociates, who waited Montgomeri's arrival. The chieftain came attended by fifty choſen ſoldiers, deſperate, and capable of any at-

tempt. They croſſed the ſand, and having placed their ſcaling-ladders, mounted one by one: as they came to the top, they were diſpatched each in turn, without noiſe. Montgomeri, who followed laſt, at length diſcovered the perfidy, and eſcaped with only two of his men, with whom he regained the "Tombelaine." They preſerve with great care the ladders and grappling irons uſed on this occaſion.—You perhaps remember the ſubſequent fate of the Count himſelf. He was at laſt beſieged and taken priſoner by the Marechal de Matignon, in 1574, at Domfront in Normandy; and Catherine of Medicis, who deteſted him for his having been, though innocently, the cauſe of her huſband's death, ordered him to be immediately executed.

The church itſelf detained me a long time, and is matter of high curioſity. It reſts on nine pillars of moſt enormous dimenſions, which ſtand upon the ſolid rock. I did not meaſure them; but, as far as the gloominess of the place would admit,

admit, I apprehend that each of them muſt be five-and-twenty feet in circumference: beſides theſe, there are two others, of much inferior ſize, which ſupport the center of the church, over which is the tower. If the prodigious incumbent weight be conſidered, and the nature of its ſituation, nothing leſs maſſy could ſuſtain the edifice. They ſeem as if deſigned to outlive the ravages of time, and the convulſions of nature. — But before we enter the church itſelf, I muſt inform you of the abſurd and legendary cauſe, which firſt produced it.

In the reign of Childebert the ſecond, there was a biſhop of Avranches named St. Aubert. To this holy man, the archangel Michael was pleaſed to appear one night, and order him to go to this rock, and there build him a church. St. Aubert, who ſeems to have been a little incredulous, treated it as a dream: the angel came again, repeated his injunction, and not being obeyed, the third time, he, by way of imprinting it on the biſhop's

memory, made a hole in his ſkull, by touching it with his thumb. In the treaſury of the church I ſaw this curious ſkull. It is encloſed in a little ſhrine of gold, and a chryſtal, which opens over the orifice, admits the gratification of curioſity by the minuteſt examination of it. The hole is of a ſize and ſhape juſtly proportioned to the thumb ſuppoſed to have produced it, and whether done with a knife, or by what means it is perforated, I cannot determine. The biſhop however, upon this ſenſible mark of the divine pleaſure, delayed no longer; but repaired to the rock, and conſtructed a ſmall church, as he had been commanded.—Here fable ends; and true hiſtory, ſupplying its place, informs us, that it was in 966, when Richard the ſecond duke of Normandy began to build the abbey. It was compleated about the year 1070, under William the Conqueror, though many other additions were made by ſucceeding abbots.

The treaſury is crouded with relics innumerable,

numerable, among which ſome few have a real and intrinſic value. There is a fine head of Charles the ſixth of France cut in chryſtal, which drew my attention. They have got, heaven knows by what means, an arm of Edward the Confeſſor's; and they ſhewed me another, of "St. Richard, king of England." Who this ſaint and prince was, I confeſs, is beyond my comprehenſion. I am ſure they could not term Richard the firſt ſo, unleſs his cruſade againſt Saladine wiped out all his ſins, and canonized him. Richard the ſecond has no better pretenſions to ſanctity. I do not mention him who fell at Boſworth: ſo that who this royal ſaint was, I muſt leave you to divine. As to the monks, they know nothing about it; but they were poſitive he was a king of England.——An enormous golden cockle-ſhell, weighing many pounds, given by Richard the ſecond duke of Normandy, when he founded the abbey, is worthy remark.

In the middle of the choir hangs a ſtone,

which is ſaid to have fallen on the head of Louis the eleventh at the ſiege of Beſançon, without doing him the ſmalleſt injury. This, he conceived, and with reaſon, muſt have been owing to ſome wondrous divine interpoſition; for the ſtone weighs, I ſhould ſuppoſe, at leaſt ten pounds. Louis, though the greateſt monſter who ever filled a throne, was yet, at times, exceedingly pious: he uſed to come very often in pilgrimage to "Mont "St. Michel;" and he ordered this ſtone to be ſuſpended by a chain in the choir, and left an annual ſum in lands to maintain prieſts to ſay maſſes, for his preſervation from ſo imminent a danger.

The refectory, the cloiſters, the cells of the monks, are all, (or rather they have been) very magnificent, and ſpacious; but a vaſt ſum of money is wanted to put the whole in repair, and reinſtate what the lapſe of ages defaces and deforms. One of the great towers is cracked and ſhaken. They have written repeatedly to the miniſtry, to know his majeſty's plea-

ſure

ſure reſpecting it; but no anſwer has been returned. It will probably tumble ſoon, and muſt neceſſarily, from its prodigious heighth and ſize, draw with it a conſiderable part of the adjoining edifices.

The late king ſequeſtered the revenues of the abbey, which are very ample. A prior is ſubſtituted inſtead of the abbot, and the number of religious reduced from thirty to fourteen. Perhaps a few years more may even extinguiſh theſe; and St. Michael himſelf, though compoſed of gold, be melted down to ſupport the expence of a bal paré.—It is at preſent conſidered rather as a priſon of ſtate, and will more probably be repaired on that account, than as an erection of piety. The apartments are, at this time, occupied by many illuſtrious captives, who have been ſent here by "Lettre de cachet," for crimes of ſtate. They are detained in ſtricter or eaſier confinement, according to the royal mandate. There are in one range of rooms eight, who eat

at a round table together. They are allowed each a pint of wine; but neither knives or forks are ever given them, leſt they ſhould commit ſuicide, to eſcape the horrors of captivity. No perſon is permitted to enter that diviſion where they live, or can hold any converſation with them. Four of theſe are ſent here ſince the acceſſion of his preſent majeſty. There are others who have the liberty of going into every part of the Mount without reſtraint; but to profit of this permiſſion they muſt be habited as prieſts, and of conſequence, univerſally known. To eſcape, one ſhould ſuppoſe impoſſible—but what cannot human ſubtlety effect, when puſhed to deſpair? It is only ſixteen days ſince a Monſieur de C——, who had been confined ten months, ſucceeded in an attempt to ſet himſelf free. I was ſhewn the place from whence he let himſelf down by a rope: it is near a hundred feet perpendicular. He croſſed the ſands immediately, while the ſea was low; and it is imagined he has embarked for Jerſey or,

England,

England, as no intelligence has been received concerning him.

Some apartments are deſtined to a ſpecies of wretches yet more deplorable—I mean, to lunatics. There are ſeveral of high rank. In the cloiſters of the abbey, a perſon accoſted me in very polite terms. He was apparently above fifty years of age; his habit was ſqualid; at his button-hole hung a croſs of St. Michael, fantaſtically adorned with ribbons. His face, though brown and ſickly, had a ſomewhat noble, commanding, and engaging; his hair of a deep black, mixed with grey, hung floating upon his ſhoulders; and over his whole perſon was an air of dignity in ruin. It was the Marquis de R—, a Breton nobleman, who has been ſhut up here five-and-twenty years. He is inſane, but harmleſs, and perfectly obſervant of all the forms in cultivated life.——None but perſons of quality are ever ſent here on this account.

I thought the age of pilgrimages had been at an end in all European nations,

and that devotion contented itſelf with venerating its ſaints at home—but will you believe it, when I aſſure you, the number of pilgrims, who come annually to pay their vows to St. Michael at this Mount, are between eight and ten thouſand? They are moſtly peaſants, and men of mean occupations; but even among the nobleſſe there are not wanting thoſe, who are induced to make this journey from principles of piety. The little town is ſometimes ſo crowded with them, that not a bed is to be procured. I ſaw at leaſt ſix when I was there. They were young men and women. Their habit exactly correſponded with our ideas of them, as drawn from ancient ballads. Their hats were covered with cockle-ſhells, laced round the edges; and on the crown was a gilt coronet, above which was the croſs. A ribbon in the ſame form was tied acroſs their breaſt; and all over their cloaths were placed little images of St. Michael vanquiſhing the devil. I aſked them from whence they came? they ſaid, from Champagne;

pagne; a very conſiderable diſtance, acroſs all France. I put ſeveral queſtions to them; and they would willingly have followed me when I went up to the top of the ſteeple; but the Swiſs, who was well accuſtomed to ſee theſe poor devotees arrive, repulſed them very roughly for their temerity. "Que diable!" ſays he, "allez, "prier le bon Saint Michel, ſi vous vou-"lez! Je ne conduis pas le menu peu-"ple!" The poor pilgrims retired immediately, without a word.——It is ſaid, the late dauphin was here incog, about nineteen or twenty years ago; and the old man who conducted me acroſs the ſands, aſſured me he had the honour to be his highneſs's guide, without knowing at the time his rank. His character was that of a bigot, and I am not at all ſurprized at ſuch a proof of it.——At the foot of the mountain, cloſe to the waves, is a very fine well of freſh water; but as this might and would be undoubtedly poſſeſs'd by an enemy in caſe of a ſiege, they have contrived to hollow into the ſo-

lid rock, ciſterns proportionate to every other part of the building, and capable of containing many hundred tuns of water; they ſay more than twelve hundred. Indeed, to beſiege it would be madneſs: a hundred men might defend it againſt ten thouſand aſſailants, and any number of veſſels; nor could it be, if taken, converted to any ſort of uſe.

The town itſelf is almoſt as curious as any other part of the Mount. I doubt not there are many houſes in it five or ſix hundred years old; and I did not ſee one which ſeemed to be built ſince Louis the eleventh's time. The whole number of perſons reſident in the abbey, and in the town, does not exceed a hundred and eighty, in time of peace. A militia, compoſed of the Bourgeoiſie, mount guard, to prevent any of the priſoners from eſcaping. In time of war there are five hundred ſoldiers commonly in garriſon; and they aſſured me, ſo vaſt and numerous are the chambers in different parts, that thirteen thouſand

thouſand might be diſpoſed of without any ſort of inconvenience.

They ſell little legendary books in the town: I have bought them all, in hopes to find ſome hiſtorical anecdotes or traditions reſpecting the place, and the various important events or ſieges it has undergone;—but alas! this is a vain attempt. They are all ſtuffed with miracles, and abſurdities too ridiculous to repeat; and St. Michael and St. Aubert are the only heroes who make any figure in the annals of monkery.—I would moſt willingly have inſpected the archives which are laid up in the abbey; but this is not permitted. It muſt be a very curious reſearch, ſince it is probable every king of England, from the Conqueror to Henry the third, had been many times here from motives of devotion or curioſity.

In the year 1090, Robert duke of Normandy, and William Rufus, beſieged their brother Henry a long time in the "Mont St. Michel." It muſt be preſumed they were maſters of the foot of the rock; for

for otherwiſe it would be impracticable to inveſt it. The prince could never have been reduced to ſurrender from force; but he wanted water, and from this neceſſity he was on the point of yielding the fortreſs, when Robert, with that benevolence and generoſity which marked his character, ſent him ſome pipes of wine; and this ſuccour, (like that which Henry the fourth permitted his troops to give the Pariſians,) enabled Henry to hold out. Rufus reproached him for his conduct; "What," ſaid Robert; "ſhall we "ſuffer our brother to die of thirſt?"—And what return did he meet with? An impriſonment of twenty-eight years in a vaulted chamber of Cardiff caſtle, where he expired.

I fear to have tired you with ſo diffuſe a deſcription of this mountain. I ſet out this morning, and, conducted by the ſame guide acroſs the ſands, reached the village of Genet at ten. Numbers of people are drowned every year in paſſing this place. The ſea comes in with a fury and rapidity beyond

beyond idea, and frequently arreſts unhappy travellers, who preſume to venture without a guide. I ſaw, in the church-yard of Genet, a grave where five perſons were interred who periſhed within theſe few days, and ſimilar accidents are common.—It was noon when I returned to Granville, my fancy entirely occupied with the extraordinary ſcenes to which I had been witneſs, and which I have endeavoured to depicture without ſtudy or arrangement.

This town is ſituated very pleaſantly on a neck of land ſtretching into the ſea. It is not ſmall; but the buildings are ſcattered, mean, and irregular, extending near a mile from one extremity to the other, part on the rock above, and part in the vale below.—It is open to the ſea, there being no bay, though they have conſtructed part of a pier to ſhelter the ſhipping. Some ſmall redoubts and batteries have been erected during the late war, on the eminences round the place, to

defend

defend it from invaſion; but they are of no ſtrength.

It is time to conclude this long letter. My next will be probably from ſome part of Bretagne. Adieu!

Yours, &c.

St. Malo,

St. Malo, Tueſday, 4th September, 1775.

I Arrived here yeſterday morning. It was very late Saturday night when I reached Avranches; and had I been a Roman Catholic, I ſhould inevitably have put both myſelf and my carriage under the protection of the Virgin, or ſome ſaint the patron of travellers, before I adventured into theſe perilous roads. The chaiſe once ſtuck faſt for near an hour, and I was obliged to employ a dozen peaſants, who with the help of pick-axes, and infinite labour, at length heaved it up by main ſtrength.

Avranches detained me a few hours. The city is the naſtieſt I have yet ſeen in France; but its ſituation is very fine. The cathedral ſtands on a hill, which terminates abrupt: the front extends to the extreme verge, and overhangs the precipice. It bears the marks of high antiquity. The towers are decayed in many places, though its original conſtruc-

tion has been wondrouſly ſtrong. While I ſtood under it, one of the prieſts very politely accoſted me, and offered, as I appeared to be a ſtranger, to give me ſome information reſpecting it.

"The cathedral," ſaid he, "has been "the work of different ages; but the "two weſtern towers are ſuppoſed to be "as old as the eighth century, the "biſhoprie itſelf having been founded "about the year four hundred. One of "the Engliſh kings, Henry the ſecond, "received abſolution here, from the Papal "Nuncio, for the murder of St. Thomas-"à-Becket, in 1172, and the ſtone on "which he kneeled during the perfor-"mance of that ſolemn ceremony, "ſtill exiſts." He carried me to look at it. The length is about thirty inches, and the breadth twelve. It ſtands before the north portal, and on it is ingraved a chalice in commemoration of the fact.

The ruins of the caſtle are very extenſive and ſuperb; and beneath lies a rich extent

extent of country, covered with orchards, and abounding in grain.

I continued my journey Sunday at noon, and reached the city of Dol in Bretagne the ſame evening. At Pontorſon the two provinces ſeparate, the little river Coeſnon forming the boundary. — Dol muſt detain every man who has a veneration for the veſtiges of antiquity. Except the epiſcopal palace, which is an elegant modern building, there is not a houſe within the walls, which does not ſeem to have been erected in ages the moſt barbarous and remote. The fortifications are in the ſame ſtyle, and appear to have been antiently very formidable. Hiſtory confirms this. William the Conqueror twice laid ſiege to Dol, and was twice repulſed. In 1075, Philip king of France forced him to make a haſty retreat into Normandy; and when he again attempted to make himſelf maſter of it in 1085, Alain duke of Bretagne obliged him to retire ſomewhat ignominiouſly. Henry the ſecond,

more ſucceſsful, carried it by ſtorm in 1173.

It was a beautiful autumnal evening, and I walked near half a league from the town to view a ſingular curioſity. In the middle of a very large orchard ſtands a ſtone, compoſed of only one piece, and between forty and fifty feet high. Its circumference near the baſe equals its heighth. The form is circular and pyramidical. It is called "La Pierre du "champ dolent."—"The ſtone of the "field of lamentation." There are no certain accounts when, or on what occaſion it was thus erected; but the traditions relative to it are equally numerous and contradictory. I had the pleaſure to ſee and converſe with the gentleman on whoſe eſtate it is ſituated. He ſaid, the moſt approved opinion was, that Julius Cæſar had cauſed it to be erected as a trophy to mark the extent of his conqueſts, after a bloody engagement, which he gained over the inhabitants of Armorica. The peaſants

peaſants are fully perſuaded the devil did it in one of his idle hours; "but," added he, "I have myſelf cauſed the earth "to be removed round its baſe to the "diſtance of forty feet on every ſide; "and I find that it joins to a prodigious "rock, from which it ſeems to have "ſprung; ſo that I am induced to think, "notwithſtanding its name, that it is a "natural, and not a factitious produc-"tion." However cauſed, it is very extraordinary, and deſerves an attentive inveſtigation.

I got to this city yeſterday. The caſtle was built by the celebrated Anne of Bretagne, who annexed the duchy to the crown of France by her marriage with Charles the eighth. She was aſked by the engineer who conſtructed it, what plan ſhe would chooſe as its model. "My "coach," ſaid ſhe. It is ſo in effect. A large ſquare area within conſtitutes the body: two ſmall towers in the fore-part, anſwer to the fore-wheels of a carriage, as two others of ſuperior ſize do, to the

hinder ones; a projection in front forms the pole, and an arched nich behind, correſponds to the place where the laquais was uſed to ſtand. Conſcious that poſterity would accuſe her of caprice and abſurdity, ſhe has obviated their criticiſms in a manner truly royal, by an inſcription engraved in the wall, and very legible at this hour. I read it,

"Qui que gronde, tel eſt mon plaiſir!"

You will allow this is the reaſoning of a ſovereign.

St. Malo is ſituated in an iſland joined to the continent by a cauſeway. The ancient city and biſhopric were half a league diſtant, on the main-land; but in the year 1172, John de la Grille removed his reſidence to the little iſland of St. Aaron, and began the town which now exiſts. The houſes are all lofty and elegant; but the ſtreets, owing to the want of ground and the number of inhabitants, are narrow, dirty, and ill pierced.

To-morrow I proceed to Rennes.

Nantes,

Nantes, Saturday, 16th September, 1775.

I Left St. Malo laſt Thurſday ſevennight, and lay at Hedé, a little town ſituate on the ſummit of a mountain, and commanding a moſt extenſive proſpect. I got to Rennes next morning. Here I had flattered myſelf with the pleaſure of ſeeing the celebrated monſieur de la Chalotais, who, after having ſuffered all the puniſhments which deſpotiſm can inflict, is now returned to ſpend the little remainder of his days in his native province. I had very particular letters to introduce me to his acquaintance; but he was gone to his ſeat at Caradeuc, the preceding day. To the honour of his preſent majeſty and the miniſtry, they have endeavoured to make him every compenſation for the cruel indignities he met with under the late reign. The king has preſented him with three hundred thouſand livres, beſides a penſion. He is reſtored to his place of "Procureur general au parlement;" and

his eſtate of Caradeuc is to be erected into a marquiſate.

I ſtaid near two days at Rennes. It is the honorary capital of Bretagne, becauſe the ſtates are aſſembled there; but like all cities deſtitute of commerce, is dull and poor. Several of the principal ſtreets are however very handſome, as the conflagration in the year 1720, which almoſt reduced the whole place to aſhes, obliged the inhabitants to rebuild them. In one of the ſquares, is a fine ſtatue in bronze of Louis the fifteenth. It was erected by the province in 1744, ſoon after his recovery from that dangerous illneſs in Flanders, when he obtained the title of "Bien aimé." Beneath the prince appears on one ſide Hegeya the goddeſs of health, with her ſerpent and patera; and on the other, is the genius of Bretagne, kneeling on one knee, in her countenance exultation and reverence finely marked. At the foot of the pedeſtal is an inſcription in Latin, dictated by adulation and falſehood. I bluſhed as I read it, for the monarch

monarch to whom it was offered. He lived, like his predeceſſor, to ſee all theſe marks of public approbation ceaſe; and, loſt to greatneſs or glory in the arms of his miſtreſſes, a dark cloud overſhadowed the evening of a reign, which he had opened with ſome applauſe.

Rennes is ſituate on the little river Vilaine. It was anciently fortified very ſtrongly; but the walls are now in ruins, and the foſſé nearly filled up. The ſiege it ſuſtained by Edward the third of England, and John of Gant his ſon, is celebrated in ſtory. The Engliſh and Breton army conſiſted of forty thouſand men; and yet, after having remained before it ſix months, was obliged to retire without ſucceſs.

I arrived here on Monday laſt. This is a handſome city, and its ſituation is equally advantageous and agreeable. Nantes is built on the eaſy declivity of a hill, deſcending on all ſides to the river. The Loire itſelf may almoſt vie with the Thames. Exactly oppoſite to the ſpot on which

which ſtands the town, it is divided into ſeveral channels, by a number of ſmall iſlands, moſt of which are covered with elegant houſes. The great quay is more than a mile in length; the buildings very ſuperb, and chiefly erected ſince the late peace. As its commerce is every year increaſing, the city is conſequently in a ſtate of continual improvement and advance in beauty. The Loire is notwithſtanding very ſhallow; and all goods are brought up in large boats from Painbeuf, which is nine leagues diſtant, near the mouth of the river, and at which veſſels of burden are obliged to ſtop. At the eaſtern extremity of the town ſtands the caſtle, in which the ancient dukes of Bretagne held their reſidence. It was erected about the year 1000; but the duke of Mercœur, who during the long wars of the League, rendered himſelf in ſome degree ſovereign of the province, made ſeveral conſiderable additions to it. In the chapel, Anne, ducheſs of Bretagne, married Louis the twelfth in 1499; and

by this ſecond union, confirmed the duchy to the crown of France. They ſhowed me the chamber in which the Cardinal de Retz was confined, by order of Anne of Auſtria, and from which he made his eſcape by letting himſelf down with a rope into a boat, which waited for him on the Loire.

Many of the dukes of Bretagne are interred in the different churches of the city. The moſt ſplendid of all the monuments erected to their memory, is that of Francis the ſecond, in whoſe perſon they terminated. It is in the "Egliſe des "Carmes," and was the offering of filial duty. His daughter Anne cauſed it to be conſtructed, while ſhe was queen of France. Michael Columb, a Breton by birth, was the artiſt; and it muſt be confeſſed to be a "chef d'œuvre" in ſculpture. The tomb is as magnificent as any of thoſe in St. Denis; and not content with this proof of her piety and attachment to his memory, ſhe ordered her heart to be depoſited within a golden

golden box, in the ſame vault.—The inſcription near the tomb, is very curious. It relates that Francis the ſecond, after having been married ſeven years to his firſt wife without iſſue, as his laſt reſource, made a vow to the Virgin, that if by her interceſſion or power, he obtained a child, he would dedicate to her an image of his own weight in gold. The holy Virgin, whether moved by the prodigious value of the preſent, or whether touched with pity, heard the prayer very favourably. The duke had a ſon, and performed his vow; though exigencies of ſtate obliged him ſome years afterwards to retract the princely donation he had made.—By his ſecond wife Margaret de Foix, he had the princeſs Anne.

Nantes was anciently, like almoſt every city in Europe, very ſtrongly fortified. Peter de Dreux, one of their dukes, ſurrounded it with walls, which have only been demoliſhed within theſe few years. The bridge is an object of curioſity. It is near a mile and a half in length, being

continued

continued acroſs all the little iſlands in the Loire, from north to ſouth. There are two other rivers conſiderably ſmaller, which unite at this city. One of them is called the Erdre. I went up it, about two leagues yeſterday, to a gentleman's Chateau, where I dined. The Meander, ſo famous in Grecian fable, can hardly exceed it in beauty. It winds between groves of cheſnut, oak, and poplar, which cover the banks to the edge of the water, and which are only interrupted by vineyards, gardens, and elegant villas. About half way, are the ruins of a celebrated fortreſs poſſeſſed by the Hugonots, called the caſtle "de la Verriere," and at the diſtance of a mile from the houſe where I ſpent the day, is an ancient manſion embowered in woods, which belonged to Peter Landais, the famous and unworthy favourite of Francis the ſecond.

Bretagne is by no means ſo fertile or cultivated a province as Normandy. The interior part is chiefly open and heathy, but the ſea-coaſts are both more populous,

populous, and richer in the ſoil. Round this city, and to the ſouthward, in the "Pays de Retz," vines are very numerous, and they make a thin, ſour wine, known by the name of "Vin Nantois."——If we compare the preſent condition of Bretagne, as conſtituting a part of the kingdom, with its ancient one, as an independent government, there can be no doubt that the change was the moſt ſalutary and happy to be conceived. While under the dominion of their native princes, the duchy was a ſcene of continual war, bloodſhed, and devaſtation. The dukes of Normandy, or kings of France, were ever aiming at its reduction, and the former effected it more than once. The inteſtine commotions which were raiſed by the oppoſite pretenſions of John de Montfort and Charles of Blois, in the fourteenth century, left the miſerable country unpeopled, deſolate, and a prey to the moſt ſevere famine. Louis the eleventh paved the way for its re-union to the crown. The lady of Beaujeu, left

regent

regent at his death, purſued her father's meaſures with vigour; and the narrow, parſimonious character and conduct of Henry the ſeventh, whoſe avarice prevented him from lending any effectual ſuccour to Francis or his daughter, conſpired to complete this important acquiſition.—— I do not recollect many immortal or ſublime ſpirits whom they have produced. Bertrand du Gueſclin, Conſtable of France, ſo renowned in the wars of Edward the third and the Black Prince, was a native of Bretagne; and Abelard, Heloiſe's unhappy lover, too well known by his amours and his misfortunes, was born at a village called Le Palet, only ten or twelve miles from Nantes, near the borders of Poictou. He lived in the twelfth century, under Conan the third, duke of Bretagne.

The origin of Nantes is very uncertain. It is carried into remote antiquity. The Romans doubtleſs had a ſtation here. In the year 1580, among the ruins of a tower demoliſhed at that time, was found a ſtone,

a ſtone, which, by order of the magiſtrates, was tranſported, in 1606, to the "Hotel de Ville." The inſcription on it has greatly exerciſed the attention of antiquaries. It is very legible, and in Roman characters. I tranſcribed it myſelf. This is it.

"Numinib: Auguſtor:
"Deo: Vol: Jano.
"M: Gemel: Secundus. et C. Sedat: Florus.
"Actor: Vicanor. Portent. Tribunal. C. M.
"Locis ex Stipe conlata poſuerunt."

I cannot forbear mentioning to you one other monument equally ſingular. Near a bridge which croſſes the Loire, called "Le Pont de la belle Croix," is a ſtone fixed in the wall, with the remains of a decayed inſcription. It was erected to mark the ſpot where Gilles Marechal de Retz was burnt, under the reign of Charles the ſeventh, and, as I think, about the year 1440. This nobleman was accuſed of, and condemned to die, for crimes, which were ſaid to be ſo horrible and enormous, as to preclude mention. They were

were never divulged, but covered up under a veil of darkneſs and myſtery. A very ingenious man, to whom I am indebted for almoſt all the information I have gained here, aſſured me that his trial is yet preſerved among the archives of the city; but has never been opened, or even inſpected into, from the ſame motives of horror and caution which actuated his judges. I muſt confeſs this appears to me very extraordinary.

The environs of Nantes are agreeable; and I ſhould be tempted to make a longer ſtay here, if the advanced ſeaſon did not compel me to haſten my journey. —— I ſhall ſet out in two hours for La Rochelle. Whether I purſue my rout to Bourdeaux, through Saintonge, or make an excurſion by Poitiers and Angouleſme, I do not yet know; you ſhall hear of me as I proceed.

La Rochelle, Wedneſday, 20th Sept. 1775.

I SLEPT at Aigrefeille laſt Saturday night, a little village on the confines of Bretagne, and breakfaſted next morning at Montague, the firſt town in Poictou. I continued my journey the whole day through that province, and arrived, as the ſun ſet, at Moreille. The evening was uncommonly beautiful, and I ſhould have proceeded ſome miles farther, if a very large convent, which ſtood oppoſite to the poſt-houſe, in one of the fineſt ſituations to be conceived, had not ſeemed to demand my attention. I ordered horſes for the enſuing morning, and walked up to look at it. The great gates were open, and admitted me into a ſpacious court, or lawn, in front of the building. Here I met the Prior: he was a thin, ſpare figure, apparently paſt his fiftieth year, if his habit did not tend to deceive the judgment. He accoſted me with extreme politeneſs; and, on my informing him that

I was

I was a traveller, induced by curiosity to visit his convent, he conducted me into the church, and through the apartments. "We are," said he, "of the Cistercian "order, and owe our foundation to Elea- "nor, queen of England, and wife to "Henry the second: but during the un- "happy wars of the League, the chief "scene of which lay in this part of the "kingdom, our archives were all carried "away, and the building itself defaced, "by the soldiery of Coligni."——When we had finished our view of it, he insisted on my company to supper. It was served up with great elegance, and followed by a desert from the gardens of the priory, which were very extensive. I staid till near midnight, and left my generous host with the utmost regret.

I got to Marans, Monday morning. This is a miserable town, situate on the river Sevre, which divides Poictou from the "Pays d'Aunis." At a small distance from the place, on the bank of the river, towards its mouth, tradition yet points

out the spot rendered celebrated by the interview of Louis the eleventh and his brother Charles duke of Guyenne. The artful monarch exhausted all the wiles of his treacherous and crooked policy to gain his brother, in vain; and their interview, like most others between princes, was attended with no beneficial effect.

It is only twenty miles from Marans to La Rochelle, through a rich country, covered with vines. This city, so famous in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the refuge of the Hugonots, and their grand barrier against the royal power—is still a commercial and populous place, though declined from its ancient lustre. The port, though it does not admit vessels of any considerable burthen, is yet finely calculated for trade. It may be divided into three parts: the bason, which is the innermost, is only a quarter of a mile in circumference; and at the entrance rise two very noble Gothic towers, called the "Tour de St. Nicolas," and the "Tour de la Chaine." They are now

in a ſtate of decay, but were anciently deſigned to protect the town and harbour. Without theſe, is the "Avant Port," extending more than a league, and bounded by two points of land, to the north and ſouth. Beyond, is the road, where the largeſt ſhips uſually anchor, protected from the ſouth-weſt winds by the iſlands of Ré, Oleron, and Aix. Before the ceſſion of Canada to the Engliſh, and of New Orleans to the crown of Spain, the trade of La Rochelle was very lucrative. It has again revived within theſe two laſt years, to the coaſt of Guinea, and the Eaſt Indies.

This place cannot lay claim to any remote antiquity. It was a little collection of houſes on the ſhore, inhabited by fiſhermen, when William the ninth, laſt Count of Poicton, rendered himſelf maſter of it in 1139. He tranſmitted it to his only daughter Eleanor, who, after her divorce from Louis the ſeventh of France, brought all her ample dowry to Henry the ſecond of England.

Louis transgreſſed every rule of true policy, in ſuffering ſo great a princeſs to carry her poſſeſſions into the family of his vaſſal, already too powerful. The charter of Eleanor, incorporating the town of La Rochelle, yet ſubſiſts, in the regiſters of the city. She granted them many peculiar privileges, which her ſon Richard the firſt afterwards confirmed. Under John, the Engliſh affairs declined; and though St. Louis, moved by ſcruples of honour and conſcience, reſtored to Henry the third all Saintonge, and Aunis, yet his ſon, Philip the Bold, re-conquered them again ſome years after. The battle of Poitiers, under Edward the third, was followed by the ſurrender of all the adjoining provinces and cities. Rochelle conſtituted part of the dominions given to the Black Prince by his father; but his reign was very ſhort, and he lived to ſee them again re-united to France by Charles the fifth, in the latter years of Edward's reign.

The Reformed religion, which was firſt introduced into the kingdom about 1540,

met with a moſt favourable reception here; and this city became, under Charles the ninth, the grand aſylum of the Proteſtants. The maſſacre of Paris was followed ſoon after by the memorable ſiege, which began in November 1572, and was raiſed in June 1573. Enthuſiaſm ſupplied the beſieged with a conſtancy and courage, that rendered them ſuperior to the aſſailants: and the Duke of Anjou, who commanded the royal army, was happy to find a pretext, in his election to the crown of Poland, for withdrawing his ſhattered troops, after having loſt twenty-two thouſand men before the place. This ſucceſs conduced to inſpire them with reſolution to withſtand Louis the thirteenth, in 1627; but Richlieu's daring genius was not to be awed into any ſubmiſſion. After having precluded every ſource of aſſiſtance by ſea and land, and held it inveſted thirteen months, it ſurrendered to the royal clemency. The calamities which the garriſon endured from famine, are only to be compared with

those of Jerusalem under Titus, and perhaps even exceed them. It was the last effort of religious opposition, and the æra which established an unlimited regal power throughout the kingdom.

I went yesterday twice, to view the dyke so renowned, erected by Richlieu. When the sea retires, it is visible; and I walked out upon it above three hundred feet. It extends from side to side, across the harbour, nearly an English mile in length. Its breadth is, at this time, more than one hundred and fifty feet, and it widens continually towards the base. No monument of architecture, however superb or beautiful, no production of elegance, however refined, can possibly impress the mind with so vast and sublime an idea of the genius of Richlieu, as does this bulwark against the sea. While I stood upon it, in the middle of the port, between the waves which rolled on either side, and contemplated its durability, extent, and strength, I was almost inclined to suppose this wondrous work superior

to

to human power, and the production rather of a deity than of a mortal. A small opening, of about two hundred feet, was left to give entrance to vessels, and shut up by chains stretched across. A tower was likewise constructed at each end, no vestiges of which now remain. Neither Buckingham, or Lindsey, who were successively sent to the aid of the besieged by Charles the first, dared to attack this formidable barrier: they retired, and left La Rochelle to its fate. In all probability, the lapse of a thousand years, aided by storms, and all the fury of the sea, will make little or no impression on this dyke, which is designed to endure as long as the Cardinal's fame, who dared to construct it.

From the northern point of the harbour, is a fine view of the three islands, Ré, Oleron, and Aix. It was on the former that the duke of Buckingham landed, and, after his fruitless attempt on the citadel of St. Martin, was repulsed with the loss of eight thousand men.

This

This island, which is only six leagues in length, is separated from the main land by a channel of three miles. It contains, I am assured, twenty thousand inhabitants, and is better cultivated than the finest province of France: while Oleron, which is more than double its size, has not near that number of people, and is neither rich, or in the same state of improvement. This results from their different political situation, the island of Ré being free, and exempt from all imposts or taxation.

On the southern side of the port stands a convent of Minims, erected by Louis the thirteenth, after the termination of the siege, in 1628, to pray for the souls of those who perished before La Rochelle. When Charles the ninth began to invest it, there were then seventy-two thousand persons in the city. In the second siege, they had diminished to twenty-eight thousand; and at present, the inhabitants are only between seventeen and eighteen thousand; of which scarce two thousand are

Hugonots

Huguenots.—Religious animosity has entirely subsided: the citizens are accounted as loyal, as well attached to the crown, as any of France; and Louis the fifteenth permitted the inscriptions engraven on copper, and affixed by Richlieu on either side the doors of the monastery I mentioned, to be taken down a few years since, solemnly broken, and thrown into the sea.—I purpose to leave Rochelle to-morrow, and shall take the rout of Rochfort and Saintes.

A gentleman with whom I supped last night assured me, that the family of d'Olbreuse exists still, and that they reside near Chateauneuf, upon the Charente, in Angoumois. He added, that their circumstances were narrow almost to distress. You will surely recollect, that this house is allied to the blood royal of England. George-William, the last duke of Zell, married Mademoiselle d'Olbreuse, at Breda, about the middle of the last century. They had only one daughter, the beautiful and unhappy Sophia, so well known for her misfortunes,

misfortunes, and mother to his late majesty George the second.

The weather here is the most serene and delightful to be imagined. The vintage is already begun round the city; and the peasants are engaged in all that happy festivity natural to the season and the employment. I shall have the pleasure of seeing this scene continued to the foot of the Pyrenees, as they do not begin their vintage in Guyenne and Gascony till the middle or close of October.

This is a long, historical letter. It is time to finish it, and subscribe myself, &c. &c.

Saintes,

Saintes, Sunday, September 24th, 1775.

THE diſtance from La Rochelle to Rochfort is ſeven leagues. The firſt four are exceedingly pleaſant, the road lying along the ſea-ſhore, and in view of the iſlands Oleron and Aix, which appear at a ſmall diſtance. It is now almoſt a century ſince Louis the fourteenth conſtructed Rochfort. The city is built in the midſt of marſhes, which were drained for that purpoſe. Colbert was then prime miniſter, and it is ſaid, he uſed to call it "La Ville d'Or," from the prodigious ſums his maſter had expended in its erection. Time has, however, given the ſanction of utility to the project, and rendered this port as neceſſary and important to the crown of France, as either Breſt or Toulon. It is ſituate on the Charente, about five leagues from its mouth. I ſpent ſeveral hours, Friday morning, in the different magazines and dock-yards. Every thing appears to be under

under an admirable regulation; and the ſeveral branches of naval equipment are carried on with the utmoſt vigour and diſpatch. It ſeems to be a grand object of attention with the preſent miniſtry to reſtore the navy, almoſt totally deſtroyed during the late war.

The number of workmen commonly employed at Rochfort, is about nine hundred. To theſe are added ſix hundred galley ſlaves, who are occupied in the moſt painful and laborious parts of ſervice. They are chained two and two with heavy fetters, conſtantly guarded, and kept in a long building erected for that purpoſe in the center of the yard. Some of theſe wretches are thus kept for a term of years; others during life. The precautions uſed to prevent their eſcape are very excellent, dictated by great diſcernment, and improved on continually by experience: yet, in ſpite of every obſtacle, they continually elude them.

The armoury, the rope-walks, the ſtore-houſes of every kind, are all in the beſt order,

order, and kept with prodigious neatness. Louis the fourteenth fortified the city at the time he erected it; but its situation, at so considerable a distance from the sea, renders it sufficiently secure from any attack, and they have therefore lately closed up the battlements, and neglected the ſoſſes. It is laid out with great beauty and elegance. The ſtreets are all very broad and ſtrait, traverſing the whole place from ſide to ſide; but the buildings do not correſpond to them in this reſpect, as they are moſtly low and irregular.

The province of Saintonge begins at a ſmall diſtance from Rochfort: this city is the capital of it. The antiquities which Saintes yet preſents, have chiefly detained me here ſince yeſterday morning. It was a Roman colony, and thoſe conquerors of the earth, who poliſhed the nations they ſubdued, have left the traces of their magnificence behind them. In a hollow valley, between two mountains, and almoſt adjoining to one of the ſuburbs, are the ruins of the amphitheatre. Though

now in the laſt ſtage of decay, its appearance is very auguſt and venerable. In ſome parts, ſcarce any of the arches are to be ſeen; but the eaſt end is ſtill in a great degree of preſervation. From its ſituation in a valley, and from the ruins of an aqueduct which conveyed water to the town near three leagues, it has been ſuppoſed that Naumachiæ were repreſented in it, but this amounts only to conjecture. A triumphal arch, on which is an inſcription in Roman letters, merits likewiſe attention. It was erected to Germanicus, on the news of his death, ſo univerſally lamented throughout the empire.

The river Charente ſurrounds this city, as the Severn does that of Shrewſbury, forming a horſe-ſhoe. I have been walking in the beautiful meadows which border it, and from whence the buildings of the town have a fine effect. Though the Charente cannot compare with the Loire or the Rhone in ſize and depth, yet the actions which have been performed on its banks, in different ages, will render it

immortal

immortal in ſtory. At Taillebourg, only ſix miles from hence, nearer to its mouth, was fought the battle between Henry the third of England, and St. Louis, where the latter was conqueror, and in which he gave proofs of undaunted proweſs and intrepidity, in defending almoſt alone, the paſſage of a bridge againſt the whole oppoſite army, during ſome minutes. Francis the firſt, the moſt amiable and accompliſhed prince who ever reigned in France, except Henry the fourth, was born at Cognac, only ſeven leagues higher up on the Charente. Two leagues beyond Cognac, ſtill nearer its ſource, is the famous plain of Jarnac, where the Hugonots were beat by the duke of Anjou, and where the Great Louis, firſt prince of Condé was aſſaſſinated by Monteſquiou. I am told the Count de Jarnac has cauſed a monument to be erected within theſe few years over the ſpot where periſhed that unhappy prince. I intended fully to have gone along the banks of the Charente, through both theſe laſt mentioned places,

to Angouleſme; but the difficulties are inſuperable. There is neither a poſt road, nor horſes yet eſtabliſhed; and I therefore purſue the ſtrait rout to Bourdeaux, through Pons and Blaye.

Except the remains of Roman grandeur yet viſible at Saintes, the place contains very little to detain or amuſe. It is built with great irregularity; the ſtreets are narrow and winding; the houſes mean, and almoſt all of them ſome centuries old. The cathedral has been repeatedly ravaged and deſtroyed by Normans and Hugonots, who made war alike on every monument of art or piety. One tower only eſcaped their rage, which is ſaid to have been conſtructed as early as the year eight hundred, by Charlemagne. It is of enormous magnitude, both as to circumference and heighth. Theſe qualities, ſuperadded to its prodigious thickneſs and ſtrength, have probably conduced to preſerve it in the ſtorms of war, more than any veneration for the memory of its founder,

founder, or regard to the ſanctity of its inſtitution.

The Reformed Religion ſeems far on the decline in this province, where antiently it had gained ſo many votaries. There is only one Proteſtant family, as I am aſſured, in Saintes: the reaſon is evident;—the fervours of devotion, warm and animated in the beginning, are nouriſhed by perſecution, but unhappily become languid and extinct in an age of more mild and tolerating principles. Intereſt is ever preſent, ever intimately felt by mankind. The Eſtabliſhed Religion holds out offices and honours: Proteſtantiſm is barren. Her rewards are in another world. Can you wonder that it loſes ground continually? Adieu!

Your's, &c. &c.

Bourdeaux, Friday, 7th October, 1775.

I Continued my journey from Saintes laſt Sunday ſe'nnight, and ſlept at Pons, a ſmall town agreeably ſituate on a hill. Near the ſummit, in the centre of the place, is an antient chateau belonging to the prince de Marſan; it commands an extenſive and luxuriant proſpect of the vales of Saintonge and Angoumois, covered with vines, and watered by two or three fine rivulets which loſe themſelves, after many windings, in the Charente. I entered the province of Guyenne the enſuing day, and arrived at Blaye, on the bank of the Garonne, Tueſday morning. I put my carriage into a boat, and came up to this city by water; the diſtance is about ſeven leagues. At Blaye, the river is above four miles in breadth, but it diminiſhes inſenſibly as one approaches Bourdeaux. Nearly half way between the two places, is the mouth of the Dordogne, which after running through the

the Limoſin and Perigord, empties itſelf into the Garonne. The proſpect at the conflux of theſe two ſtreams, is wonderfully pictureſque. It is more cultivated and pleaſing, though leſs ſublime and magnificent than that at the junction of the Viſtula and the Nogat, near Marienbourg, in Poliſh Pruſſia.

Our paſſage from Blaye was long, and the ſun declined as we turned round a point of land, which opened to us the city of Bourdeaux at the diſtance of three miles. The effect on the ſpectator is exceedingly auguſt and ſtriking. It deſcribes the figure of a creſcent more than a league in length, the buildings of which near the water-ſide, are all modern, lofty, and very elegant. I have ſeen no Coup d'œil ſo ſuperb in Europe, except the view of Liſbon from the tower of Belem on the Tagus, which though more irregular from the nature of its ſituation, is rather ſuperior in magnificence.

The favourable impreſſion which Bourdeaux cannot fail to make on a ſtranger

at his arrival, is well confirmed by a reſidence in it. Pleaſure ſeems to have as many votaries here as commerce; luxury and induſtry reign within the ſame walls, and that in the moſt extended degree. The air of courts is ever effeminate, ſeductive, and voluptuous. Commercial cities are uſually marked by oppoſite manners, and the love of gain powerful in its influence over the human heart, ſwallows up and abſorbs the more ſoft and melting paſſions. Here, however, theſe rules are entirely controverted. Diſſipation and debauchery are more openly patroniſed, and have made a more univerſal and apparent conqueſt, than in half the capitals of Europe. At Stockholm, ſcarce the ſhadow of them is perceivable. Neither Copenhagen nor St. Peterſburgh are yet advanced to the ſame point of excels, tho' aided by the preſence of a ſovereign, and the pleaſures which follow in their train. Hamburgh, though perhaps as large, as commercial, and as opulent as Bourdeaux, betrays no external marks of the diſſolu-

tion

tion of manners, and punishes them, when visible, with extreme severity. It is natural to seek for the reason of this extraordinary contrast. We shall find it, I apprehend, chiefly in the genius of the nation, gallant and amorous; in the spirit of the government, which rather encourages than represses the arts of luxury among all ranks of people. Devotion or superstition, the only engine capable of opposing the torrent, has ceased in France, where the Virgin is held in as little estimation as among us.—Divest mankind of the influence which religion, policy, and decorum has over them—what restraint can be affixed to their licentious passions?

The ancient city of Bourdeaux, though considerable, was, what every other in Europe might be esteemed at the accession of Louis the fourteenth, ill built, badly paved, dangerous, nasty, without police or any of those regulations indispensably requisite to constitute a splendid or elegant place. It has entirely changed its appear-

ance within theſe laſt thirty years. The public edifices are very noble, and all the ſtreets newly conſtructed are regular and handſome. I am never tired with walking on the banks of the Garonne. The quays are four miles in length, and the river itſelf is broader conſiderably than the Thames at London bridge. On the oppoſite ſide, a range of hills covered with woods, vineyards, churches and villas, extends beyond the view.

Almoſt in the center of the town, is a fine equeſtrian ſtatue in bronze erected to the late king in 1743. It is very rarely that I am much affected by the inſcriptions under the figures of princes, uſually only a detail of virtues and qualities they never poſſeſſed. There is ſomething ſo pathetic and ſimple, addreſſed to the heart, and not deſigned to dazzle, in this, that I have retained it in my memory.

" Ludovico quindecimo,
" Sæpe victori, ſemper pacificatori;
" Suos omnes, quam late regnum patet
" Paterno pectore gerenti;
" Suorum in animis penitus habitanti."

The

The beauty of the river, and the fertility of the adjoining country were probably the cauſes which induced the Romans to lay the foundations of this city. The ruins of a very large amphitheatre yet remain, conſtructed under the emperor Gallienus; it is of brick, as are moſt of the edifices of that period, when the empire was verging to its fall, and the arts began to decline.

In the irruption of the barbarous nations, and peculiarly in thoſe which the Normans repeatedly made, Bourdeaux was ravaged, burnt, and almoſt entirely deſtroyed. It only began to recover again under Henry the ſecond of England, who having united it to the crown by his marriage with Eleanor, rebuilt it, and made it a principal object of his policy, to reſtore it again to the luſtre from which it had fallen.

The Black Prince received all Guyenne, Gaſcony, and many inferior provinces in full ſovereignty from his father: he brought his royal captive to this city af-

ter the battle of Poitiers, and held his court and reſidence here during eleven years. His exalted character, his uninterrupted ſeries of good fortune, his victories, his modeſty, his affability, and his munificence, drew ſtrangers from every part of Europe; but all this ſplendour ſoon ſunk into night. He lived to experience the ingratitude of the man to whom he had reſtored a kingdom; he became a prey to diſtempers in the vigour of life; he ſaw his dominions reunited again, in many of their branches, to the crown of France; he loſt his eldeſt ſon, a prince of the higheſt expectations; and at length, overcome with ſorrow at this laſt affliction, he quitted Bourdeaux, and re-embarked for England, to expire, a memorable example of the haſty revolution of human greatneſs. In 1453, Charles the ſeventh re-entered it, and ſubjected the whole province, which had been near three centuries under the Engliſh government. Conſcious of the importance of ſuch a conqueſt, he ordered the "Chateau Trom-

"pette"

"pette" to be conſtructed to defend the paſſage of the river; and Louis the fourteenth employed the celebrated Vauban to erect a new fortreſs, in the modern ſtyle of military architecture, on the ſame ſpot. —Madame de Maintenon, whom fortune ſeemed to have choſen as the object of her extreameſt rigour, and extreameſt bounty, was removed from the priſons of Niort in Poictou where ſhe was born, with her father the Baron d'Aubigné, to this caſtle, where ſhe uſed to play with the daughter of the turnkey, in the extreameſt indigence.

Bourdeaux preſents few remains of antiquity. The cathedral appears to have been erected very early, and has ſuffered conſiderably during the lapſe of centuries ſince its conſtruction. The unfortunate duke of Guyenne, brother to Louis the eleventh, lies buried before the high altar.—The adjacent country, more peculiarly the "Pays de Medoc," which produces the fineſt clarets, is exceedingly pleaſant; and

and at this ſeaſon when the peaſants are all engaged in the vintage, it is one of the moſt delicious landſcapes in the world. My ſtay here will probably be ſome days longer. Meanwhile I remain, &c.

Auſch

Auſch in Armagnac,
Saturday, 14th October, 1775.

I LEFT Bourdeaux laſt Tueſday morning, and took the road to Agen, along the ſouthern bank of the Garonne, through the Bourdelois. I croſſed the river at Langon, a little town pleaſantly ſituate on its banks, and ſtopped in the evening at La Reole. It was my intention to have proceeded farther, but the landlady was too eloquent: ſhe offered to ſend her little boy who would conduct me over the ruins of the caſtle, while ſhe herſelf prepared a brace of partridges, and the fineſt deſſert in the world, againſt my return. I ſuffered myſelf to be perſuaded, and walked out. The ſun had ſet, but the ſky was without a cloud, and the air perfectly ſerene. The caſtle overhangs the waters of the Garonne, and is reflected in its ſurface: time has crumbled many of the battlements into ruin, but enough yet remains to evince its former

former greatneſs. Catherine of Medicis reſided in it ſome time, during one of the journies which ſhe made into the ſouthern provinces; and Henry the fourth, then only king of Navarre, had here an interview with her, when he became enamoured of the beautiful Mademoiſelle d'Ayelle, one of her maids of honour.

I dined the enſuing day at Aiguillon. On the hill above the town, ſtands the chateau of the celebrated duke d'Aiguillon, who has lived to experience the moſt cruel reverſe of fortune; and after having been the miniſter and the favourite of Louis the fifteenth, is now ſentenced to ſpend the remainder of his days, an exile in his own palace, without power, and unaccompanied even with that compaſſion which often waits on illuſtrious perſons in diſgrace. He has been here already ſome months, happy, if royal vengeance purſue him no farther, and the ſtories of a Fouquet or a Marechal d'Anere are not again renewed in him.

I reached Agen in the afternoon. The country through which I paſſed from Langon

gon where I croſſed the Garonne, to the gates of that city, is luxurious, and fertile beyond any I have ſeen in Europe. The hills are all covered with vineyards to the ſummit, and the vallies ſcarce require the induſtry of the peaſants to produce in plenty whatever is neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence. The climate at this time is delicious; no marks of winter appear in any of the productions of nature. Cherry trees, fig, acacia, poplar, and elms, are in full verdure: in many places, where they border the road on either ſide, the vines have run up, and mingled their cluſters among the boughs: this is truly paſtoral. Milton, in his divine flights of imagination could employ our firſt parents in no more delightful occupation, even in Paradiſe.——

"Or they led the vine
"To wed her elm; ſhe round about him throws
"Her marriageable arms; and with her brings
"Her dower, th' adopted cluſters, to adorn
"His barren leaves."

In

In the midſt of this charming country, in a plain, cloſe to the Garonne, ſtands the city of Agen. Behind it, to the north, riſes a very high hill, called "Le "Rocher de la belle Vue." I went up to the top, where there is a convent. The chapel, and ſome of the adjoining cells are hollowed into the rock. It is ſaid theſe excavations are very ancient, and were made many centuries ago by ſolitaries or hermits, who retired here from motives of devotion and auſterity. The proſpect is enchanting, commanding over the Condomois, Agenois, and Armagnac: beneath lies the city of Agen, and through the meadows which ſurround it, rolls the Garonne. A monk ſhewed me the apartments of the convent; and in the receſſes of the rock he led me to a ſpring which is never dry, and which he aſſured me had been opened by miracle, at the interceſſion of ſome holy recluſe in ages paſt. Their little refectory was hung with portraits of the ſame heroes, among which was St. William duke of Aquitaine; and

at

at the upper end, in golden letters, was written "Silentium."

Agen is a very mean and diſagreeable place: the houſes are inelegant, the ſtreets narrow, crooked, and dirty. I ſaw only one building in it, which appeared deſerving curioſity; it is a chapel belonging to a nunnery of Carmelites. The walls are exquiſitely painted in claro obſcuro, and the deception of the roof, which is executed in the ſame manner, is one of the fineſt to be imagined. The high altar is magnificent, and adorned with a painting, the ſubject of which is very intereſting. It is a nun, ſinking under the tranſports of holy enjoyment. She appears incapable of ſupporting the divine effulgence of her celeſtial lover, with eyes half cloſed, and arms expanded. Above, deſcends a radiant figure, with looks of tenderneſs and pleaſure, ſurrounded with the glories of the ſkies, too ſtrong for mortal ſight. If it had not been a religious edifice, I ſhould have ſuppoſed it to be the ſtory of Jupiter and Semelé, to

which it bears the aptest resemblance. Near the piece is this inscription.

"Quid non conatur Amor!
"Cœlos in Terris adumbrare
"Carmeli Filiæ tentarunt,
"Anno salutis
"1773."

Surely, you must here be struck with the justice of a remark we have often made together, on the intimate alliance between love and devotion; between the religious and the amorous passion, when carried to an excess. The same enthusiasm, the same melting language, the same overpowering delights, are common to both. Love, says Rousseau, in the extreme, borrows the language of Devotion; and Devotion, in her flights, adopts the expressions of attachment and fondness.

We are used to apprehend the condition of a young woman who has taken the veil to be very miserable. Where convenience, or chagrin, or melancholy, are the motives to it, I fully coincide in that opinion;

nion; but there are, I doubt not, who in the gloom of a convent, amid ſhrines and crucifixes, are yet ſupremely happy. Married to a heavenly ſpouſe, and dedicated to the embraces of a ſuperior and inviſible being, Enthuſiaſm has ample room to exert her powers, and raiſe her votary above the poor gratifications of earth.

"To ſounds of heav'nly harps ſhe dies away,
"And melts in viſions of eternal day."

But I return ——

Agen has been fortified anciently, and the battlements and turrets yet remain almoſt entire round the whole place. Margaret of Valois, daughter of Henry the ſecond of France, and wife to Henry the fourth, ſo renowned for her genius, her adventures, and her gallantries, kept her little court ſome time at this city, during the civil wars which deſolated France, and the quarrels which ſubſiſted between her huſband and brothers.—The Agenois was part of that fine domain, which by the peace of Bretigni, in 1360, was ceded

to the crown of England, and conſtituted part of the territories governed by the Black Prince. It followed the fate of Guyenne under Charles the ſeventh, who re-conquered it from us.

I continued my journey from Agen, Thurſday evening. At Layrac I once more croſſed the Garonne. The paſſage is difficult, and ſometimes dangerous, the river being very rapid, and running between high banks.——I ſtopt a few hours yeſterday morning at the city of Leytoure. As it is ſituate on a mountain, the acceſs to which is very ſteep, I left my carriage below, and walked up alone. Here, from the ſummit, I had the firſt view of the Pyrenees, at the diſtance of ninety miles; their heads loſt in clouds, and covered with eternal ſnow. While I ſtood gazing on theſe ſtupendous mountains, a gentleman very politely accoſted me, and ſeeing I was a ſtranger, offered me his ſervices to ſhew me whatever curioſities the city contained.

"This place," ſaid he, "was a Ro-

"man

"man colony, and called by them Lec-
"toura. Many antiquities have been
"found here; and a beautiful fountain,
"which ſprings from the ſide of the hill
"near the epiſcopal palace, is declared
"by immemorial tradition to have been
"conſecrated to Diana, who had a temple
"near it. In ſucceeding ages, it be-
"longed to the Counts of Armagnac,
"great vaſſals of the crown, and ſove-
"reign princes in their own territories.
"The laſt of theſe, John the fifth, was
"put to death in this city. His hiſtory
"was very ſingular. He began his reign
"in 1450. The youngeſt of his ſiſters,
"Iſabella, was a princeſs of uncommon
"beauty and accompliſhments; the Count
"conceived a paſſion for her, and, unable
"to repreſs or extinguiſh it, he deter-
"mined, in defiance of every obſtacle, to
"make her his wife. He married her
"publicly. The reigning Pope, ſcanda-
"liſed at this inceſtuous union, de-
"nounced againſt him a ſentence of ex-
"communication; and Charles the ſe-

" venth, king of France, prepared to en-
" force it by the ſeizure of his dominions.
" He ſent the Dauphin, afterwards Louis
" the eleventh, into Armagnac, at the
" head of a body of forces. The unhappy
" Count, abandoned by his ſubjects, and
" incapable of reſiſtance, fled to Fonta-
" rabia, carrying with him his beloved
" ſiſter. At the interceſſion of the Count
" de Foix, he received his pardon, and
" was reſtored to his poſſeſſions. He re-
" turned, leaving the beautiful and un-
" happy Iſabel in Spain, where ſhe died
" in the utmoſt obſcurity. — Louis the
" eleventh, leſs generous and merciful
" than his father, determined on the
" Count's deſtruction, from the deſire of
" uniting to the crown his ample fief.
" He declared war againſt him, and in
" 1473 an army, under the command of
" Peter de Beaujeu, was ſent into Armag-
" nac. John the fifth retired to Ley-
" toure, in which he was inveſted. He
" capitulated on very honourable terms,
" and on the moſt ſolemn promiſes of

" being

"being continued in his dominions.—
"But while the treaty was on the point
"of being ſigned, and the Count, con-
"fiding in the honour of the King, re-
"mitted his uſual vigilance, the ſoldiery
"broke into the town, and he was him-
"ſelf murdered in his palace, ſome veſ-
"tiges of which are yet remaining. Louis
"immediately ſeized on his poſſeſſions, as
"eſcheated to the crown."

I liſtened to this affecting ſtory with great attention. When the gentleman had concluded it, he conducted me to the brow of the mountain, where are ſtill the remains of a caſtle. "In this fortreſs," ſaid he, (renewing his diſcourſe) "the "noble and unfortunate Marechal de "Montmorenci was confined, after the "combat of Caſtelnaudari, in 1632. So "amiable was his character, ſo general "the attachment borne to him, and ſo "deteſted the Cardinal de Richlieu his "enemy, that the ladies of the place at-"tempted by a ſtratagem to procure him "his liberty. They ſent him, as a pre-"ſent,

" ſent, a large pye, in which was con-
" cealed a ſilken ladder of ropes. He
" loſt no time in endeavouring to profit
" of this inſtrument for his eſcape; and
" having fixed it, the ſame evening, to the
" window of his apartment, he ordered
" his valet to deſcend firſt, in the inten-
" tion of following him; but the ſervant
" having unfortunately miſſed his hold,
" fell, and in the fall broke his thigh.
" The centinels, alarmed at the cries he
" uttered, ran to the ſpot, and inter-
" cepted the Marechal. He was conducted
" to Toulouſe, and put to death."

My polite conductor quitted me, and I continued my walk. —— Leytoure occupies a level ſpace of more than half a mile in circumference. The fortifications in many parts are yet entire; and the ſituation, admirably calculated for defence, was probably the motive which induced the Romans to fix their reſidence there.

I left Leytoure at noon, and arrived here laſt night, the diſtance being only five-and-twenty miles. This city is the

capital

capital of Armagnac. Like the laſt, it lies on the ſummit and declivity of a hill, which deſcends very rapidly on every ſide. Other hills riſe at a ſmall diſtance, and inveſt it round. Through the vale below runs a rivulet, called the Gers. The inhabitants are about ſix thouſand, the buildings modern and elegant, the ſtreets, though in general narrow, yet clean, and well paved. In the center of the city ſtands the cathedral. It is one of the moſt magnificent in France, both as to the conſtruction and internal decorations. The painted windows are only inferior to thoſe of Gouda in Holland. The chapels are of equal beauty, and adorned with prodigious expence.

The revenues of the ſee, which is archiepiſcopal, amount annually to three hundred thouſand livres. The palace correſponds to theſe ample poſſeſſions, and is a very handſome ſtructure. The apartments are furniſhed with a voluptuous ſplendour, rather becoming a temporal than a ſpiritual prince: and in the chamber where

where the archbiſhop himſelf ſleeps, I could not help ſmiling at a number of holy relics, which he has diſpoſed round a bed, on which Heliogabalus might have repoſed. The library is very ample, and adorned with ſome portraits. Among theſe, a fine head of the Cardinal de Polignac drew my attention. There is infinite genius marked in the countenance. A pale face; the contour oval; an aquiline noſe, and an eye looking forward into futurity. Over the ſcarlet robe hangs the croſs of the Holy Ghoſt, on his breaſt. He was archbiſhop of Auſch, as they informed me.

The country through which I have paſſed, to the ſouth of the Garonne, is much more hilly, or rather mountainous, than that on the other ſide. It is not, however, leſs fertile or agreeable. Though I am aſſured every article of life is more than doubled in price within theſe laſt ten years, yet this province is ſtill one of the cheapeſt in the kingdom. The common wine is at preſent only five liards a bottle.

Hares,

Hares, partridges, and moſt kinds of game, are in vaſt abundance. Add to this, a happy climate, and a people polite and gay from natural diſpoſition, and you'll allow that a man muſt be very ſplenetic, who would die here of ennui.

To-morrow I continue my journey to Tarbes, and Pau. Meanwhile I am, &c.

Orthez

Orthez in Bearn,
Saturday, 21ſt October, 1775.

ARMAGNAC is a hilly and romantic country, abounding in beautiful proſpects, where the ſavage and the cultivated is finely blended. At Rabaſteins, a little town, I entered the province of Bigorre, and got the ſame evening to Tarbes, which is the capital. My intention was to have viſited Barege, ſo famous for its medicinal baths; but its ſituation in the midſt of the Pyrenees, where winter has already begun, and which are covered at this time with ſnow, has induced me to relinquiſh my deſign. I ſpent a day at Bagneres de Bigorre. This place is hardly leſs celebrated than the former. It is only about twelve miles diſtant from Tarbes, and the road lies through a rich vale, at the termination of which, immediately under the Pyrenean mountains, ſtands the town. It has been crowded with company during the ſum-

mer, who are now forſaking it. Nothing can exceed the environs of Bagneres in beauty. Even at this ſeaſon, when nature is declining in gaiety, and the leaves begin to take the hue of autumn, it yet retains a thouſand charms. The Pyrenees, which riſe above it, and whoſe craggy ſummits are loſt in clouds, form an object the moſt auguſt and magnificent to be imagined; while on the other ſide appear fertile vallies covered with vines, and interſperſed with hamlets. There are many ſprings near Bagneres, both warm and cold, which iſſue out of the mountains, and are of different virtues. Thoſe called "Les bains de ſalut," are the principal, about half a mile from the place, and the walk to which, between the hills, is wondrouſly agreeable.

I cannot but regret that the year is too far advanced to permit me to ſpend ſome weeks among the Pyrenees. An admirer of nature muſt find ample ſubject for inveſtigation, and equal ſources of delight, amid the various extraordinary ſcenes which

which preſent themſelves in this chain of rocks, ſtretching from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. It would ſeem as if they were deſigned to form a barrier between France and Spain, which no union of blood or policy can ever effectually ſurmount, notwithſtanding the celebrated words of Louis the fourteenth to his grandſon, when ready to ſet out for Madrid—"Mon fils, il n'y a plus des "Pyrenees."

I left Tarbes Wedneſday laſt, and got to Pau in ſix hours, the diſtance not exceeding thirty miles. The province of Bearn begins about a league from Tarbes, at the aſcent of a very ſteep and lofty hill, which divides it from Bigorre. The city of Pau will be for ever memorable in hiſtory, ſince it was the birth-place of Henry the fourth. This immortal prince was born in the caſtle, then the reſidence of the kings of Navarre. You will not doubt that I viſited it with equal pleaſure and accuracy. It ſtands on one of the moſt romantic and ſingular ſpots I have

ever ſeen, at the weſt end of the town, upon a rock which terminates perpendicular and abrupt. Below, runs the Gave, a river, or rather a torrent, that riſes in the Pyrenees, and empties itſelf into the Adour. On the other ſide, about two miles off, is a ridge of hills, covered with vineyards, which produce the famous "Vin de Jorençon," ſo much admired; and beyond all, at the diſtance of nine leagues, appear the Pyrenees themſelves, covering the horizon from eaſt to weſt, and bounding the proſpect. The caſtle, though now in a ſtate of decay, is yet habitable; and the apartments are hung with tapeſtry, ſaid to be the work of Jane queen of Navarre, and mother to Henry the fourth. Gaſton the fourth, Count de Foix, who married Leonora, heireſs of the crown of Navarre, began the edifice in 1464; but Henry d'Albret compleated and enlarged it, about the year 1519, when he made choice of Pau to reſide in; and where, during the remainder of his reign, he held his little court.

In

In a chamber, which by its ſize, was formerly a room of ſtate, is a fine length portrait of that Jane whom I have juſt mentioned. Her dreſs reſembles thoſe in which our Elizabeth is uſually depictured, and is very ſplendid. The head-dreſs is adorned with pearls; round her neck ſhe wears a ruff; and her arms, which are likewiſe covered with pearls, are concealed quite to the wriſt by her habit. At her waiſt hangs a miniature portrait by a chain. The fingers of her right hand play on the ſtrings of a guittar; and in her left ſhe holds an embroidered handkerchief. The painter has drawn her as young, yet not in the firſt bloom of youth. Her features are regular. It is a thin countenance, rather long; the eyes hazel, and the eye-brows finely arched. Her noſe is well formed, though large; and her mouth pretty. She was a great princeſs, of high ſpirit, and undaunted magnanimity. Her memory is not cheriſhed by the French, becauſe ſhe was the protectreſs of the Hugonots, and the

friend

friend of Coligni; but the actions of her life evince her merit.

In one of the adjoining chambers, is another portrait, of Henry the fourth as a boy; and on the ſecond floor, is the apartment in which he was born. The particulars of his birth are in themſelves ſo curious, and as relating to ſo great and good a prince, are ſo peculiarly intereſting, that I doubt not you will forgive my enumerating them, even though you ſhould have ſeen them elſewhere.—His mother Jane had already loſt two ſons, the duke de Beaumont, and the count de Marle. Henry d'Albret, her father, anxious to ſee an heir to his dominions, enjoined her, when ſhe accompanied her huſband Anthony of Bourbon to the wars of Picardy, if ſhe became with child, to return to Pau, and lye in, as he would himſelf ſuperintend the education of the infant, from the moment of it's birth. He threatened to diſinherit her, if ſhe failed to comply with this injunction. The princeſs, in obedience to the

king's command, being in the ninth month of her pregnancy, quitted Compiegne in the end of November, traverſed all France in fifteen days, and arrived at Pau, where ſhe was delivered of a ſon, on the thirteenth December 1553. She was deſirous to ſee her father's will, which he kept in a golden box; and he promiſed to put it into her hands, provided ſhe admitted of his being preſent at her delivery, and would, during the pains of labour, ſing a ſong in the Bearnois language. She had courage enough to perform this unuſual requeſt; and the king being called down on the news of her illneſs, ſhe immediately ſung a Bearnois ſong, beginning, "Notre Dame, du "bout du pont, aidez moi en cette heure." —As ſhe finiſhed it, Henry was born. The king inſtantly performed his promiſe, by giving her the box, together with a golden chain, which he tyed about her neck; and taking the infant into his own apartment, he began by making him ſwallow ſome drops of wine, and rubbing his lips with a root

a root of garlic. The manner of his being brought up was ſimilar, and almoſt unexampled in a prince. He was ſent to the caſtle of Coarace in Bearn; where, without any regard to his quality, he uſed to run about with the children of the neighbouring peaſants, barefooted and bareheaded, even in the ſeverity of winter. This formed his body to fatigue and hardſhip; for the exerciſe of which he had no little occaſion during his future life, in the long wars with Henry the third, and the duke of Mayenne. They ſtill ſhew a tortoiſe ſhell which ſerved him for a cradle, and is preſerved on that account.

Several of the ſovereigns of Navarre reſided and died in the caſtle of Pau. Francois Phœbus, who mounted the throne in 1479, expired here in 1483. He was only ſixteen years of age, his mother being regent. The young king, who was paſſionately fond of muſic, having taken up a flute, had no ſooner applied it to his mouth, than he felt himſelf ſtruck with a poiſon ſo violent, that he died in

two hours. This murder was attributed to Ferdinand of Arragon, a man whoſe character juſtified the worſt imputations, and who ſeized on the kingdom ſoon after. Catherine de Foix ſucceeded her brother Francois Phœbus. She married John d'Albret; and was the laſt real queen of Navarre, only an empty title having remained to her ſucceſſors. She died of grief for the loſs of her dominions, which was chiefly cauſed by the incapacity and cowardice of her huſband. Her reproach to him was very poignant: "Dom Jean," ſaid ſhe, "ſi nous fuſſions "nés, vous Catherine de Foix, et moi "Dom Jean d'Albret, nous n'aurions ja- "mais perdu la Navarre!"

Pau is a handſome city, well built, and contains near ſix thouſand inhabitants. It is a modern place, having owed its formation entirely to the caſtle, and the reſidence which the kings of Navarre made in it.

I purſued my journey this morning. The country from Pau to Orthez is

moſtly

moſtly level, finely cultivated, and abounding in vines. The peaſants ſpeak a jargon unintelligible even to the French. Their dreſs too differs very much from thoſe worn in Guyenne, and both that and their complexions bear a reſemblance to the Spaniſh.—This place is a city and biſhopric, but the meaneſt, I believe, in France. The cathedral is a wretched edifice, very barbarous, very ancient, and very ruinous. I expected to have found ſome monuments of the kings of Navarre in it; but have been diſappointed. The remains of the caſtle are very noble. Its ſituation is fine, on a hill, commanding the town of Orthez, and a great extent of country. The people call it "Le Chateau de la Reine Jeanne," becauſe that queen reſided in it, during many years, in preference to Pau. Some of the apartments, though in ruins, may yet be entered. The princeſs Blanche, daughter to John king of Arragon and Navarre, was ſhut up, and died here. Her brother being dead, ſhe became heireſs to

the crown; but her father having delivered her into the hands of her younger ſiſter Leonora, counteſs of Foix, ſhe confined her in the caſtle of Orthez, and after an impriſonment of two years, cauſed her to be poiſoned in 1464.

Hiſtory, from its earlieſt commencement to the preſent century, preſents only a frightful picture of maſſacres, perfidies and crimes, at which humanity recoils. We find ambition and ſubtlety almoſt always triumphant, while innocence, and the moſt amiable qualities, unleſs accompanied with vigour and capacity, uſually conduct their unhappy poſſeſſors to violent or ignominious exits. —But I have done with reflections. It is late, and I ſet out to-morrow for Bayonne. Probably from thence, I may ſend you the concluſion of this letter.

Bayonne,

Bayonne, Wedneſday, 25th October, 1775.

I Continued my journey laſt Sunday morning. The Pays de Bearn is a fine country, abounding in acclivities, and induſtriouſly cultivated.

I arrived at this city in the afternoon. It is one of the moſt agreeably ſituate in France, at the conflux of two rivers, the Adour and the Nive. The firſt is ſcarce leſs conſiderable than the Thames oppoſite Lambeth, and acroſs it is a wooden bridge, which joins the place to a ſuburb called "Le Fauxbourg du St. Eſprit." The Nive, which is ſmall, and riſes in the Pyrenees, interſects the centre of the city, and reſembles one of the canals in Holland. Advantageous as this ſituation appears for commerce, that of Bayonne is not only inconſiderable, but diminiſhes yearly. The entrance into the Adour, which is about four miles below the town, is rendered both difficult and hazardous

from the ſands which have collected, and form a bar acroſs the mouth. Superadded to this inconvenience, the neighbourhood of Bourdeaux draws to it moſt of thoſe articles of trade formerly exported from hence; and ſo rapidly have both the commerce and population declined, that the former is reduced to the ſhadow of what it once was, and the number of inhabitants has decreaſed within theſe laſt twelve years from twenty-one thouſand to hardly ten thouſand. It is notwithſtanding a very agreeable place of reſidence, and furniſhes in profuſion all the requiſites for human life. Wild fowl is in prodigious plenty, and the flavour exceedingly delicate. The ſea and river ſupplies excellent fiſh. The "Vin de Cap Breton," and the "Vin "d'Anglet," which are made in the adjoining country, infinitely exceed the miſerable claret drank all over this part of the kingdom, and are ſold at eight ſous a bottle. They are ſurrounded with woods which render fuel one of the cheapeſt articles, and the climate itſelf is delicious, though

though the extreme vicinity of the Pyrenean mountains increaſes the cold in winter.

The buildings of the city are in general in an antique taſte; and ſome of the ſtreets, like thoſe of La Rochelle, have porticos on either ſide; but the "Place de Grammont" on the bank of the Adour is adorned with very elegant modern houſes, and public edifices. On an eminence in the midſt of the town ſtands the cathedral. I could gain no other intelligence from the inhabitants reſpecting its conſtruction, except that the Engliſh erected it during the time they were maſters of Bayonne. It is a venerable pile, and, to judge from the ſtyle and ornaments of the various parts, cannot be older than 1350. I have made ſeveral viſits to it, in hopes of diſcovering ſome tombs or monuments of antiquity; but there is not any thing except the relics of St. Leo, who was put to death here in 907, and whoſe bones are preſerved in a ſplendid ſhrine over the high altar.

Bayonne, though conſidered as a frontier

tier place, is very ill fortified, the ramparts and foſſes being equally neglected. On the north ſide of the Adour, Louis the fourteenth cauſed a citadel to be conſtructed by Vauban, on a hill which commands the town, and there are always about a thouſand ſoldiers kept here in garriſon. Till the year 1193, this city and a conſiderable territory round it was governed by its own Viſcounts. The Engliſh rendered themſelves maſters of it under the reign of Richard the firſt, and retained the poſſeſſion till 1451, when Charles the ſeventh's victorious arms annexed it to the crown of France. It has never ſince been retaken, though Philip the third and fourth of Spain made each an attempt upon it.

The common people are called, from the name of the province in which Bayonne is ſituate, "Baſques." Their dreſs is peculiar to themſelves. The women comb the hair up on the crown of their heads, and cover it with a ſort of cap exactly reſembling a little turban. This has no inelegant effect. The complexions of

both ſexes are darker conſiderably than in Guyenne, and they ſpeak a jargon called the Baſque, which has ſcarce any affinity either with the French, Spaniſh, or even the Gaſcon dialect.

I had ſome intention, before I arrived here, of viſiting Pampelona, in the Spaniſh Navarre; but the advanced ſeaſon, the Pyrenean mountains which render it very difficult to paſs even in the ſmalleſt two-wheeled carriage, and above all, the mortality among the cattle, which has reigned a conſiderable time in this and the adjoining provinces, are ſuch inſuperable obſtacles as compel me to relinquiſh my deſign.

At this city my journey to the ſouthward terminates, and to-morrow I ſet out for Toulouſe. I am under a neceſſity of taking the ſame rout by which I came as far as Auſch, there being no other poſt-road in this part of France. I ſhall write as I proceed. Adieu!

Toulouſe,

Toulouſe, 8th November, 1775.

THE country from Bayonne to the paſſage of the Adour, is heathy, woody, and ſterile, neither well peopled nor cultivated in compariſon with moſt parts of Bearn, and Bigorre. I got to Orthez in the evening. The ſun had ſet, but after the fineſt day imaginable: I walked out, and prompted by a remaining curioſity to look once more at the ruins of the caſtle, I aſcended the hill on which it ſtands, and ſpent a few minutes within the walls. The gloom of night began already to ſhade the chambers, and ſpread an awful melancholy through the whole edifice. As I paſſed out of the great gateway into the road on my return to the inn, an old peaſant met me, and with infinite ſimplicity aſſured me, that it was already paſt the hour when the inhabitants ventured into the caſtle, becauſe the apparition of a princeſs who had been murdered in it, walked at night; and that he himſelf

when young had ſeen and heard things very unuſual, and very terrifying, in the great tower. This tradition of a murdered princeſs is certainly that of the unfortunate Blanche, whom I mentioned before; and was one of thoſe cataſtrophes which naturally give birth among the credulous and ſuperſtitious multitude to tales of ſpectres, and all their train of horrors.

I dined at Pau, and paſſed ſome time in the "Parc d'Henri quatre." This is a beautiful wood, overhanging the Gave, and terminating at a point, from whence is an extenſive and romantic proſpect. As Henry, while he held his court in Bearn, was fond of this grove, it has retained his name.

I ſpent four days at Tarbes on my return. The town ſtands in the midſt of a finely cultivated plain, but contains no objects of entertainment or inſtruction in itſelf.

Francis the firſt, at the marriage of his ſiſter Margaret with Henry d'Albret, gave

gave her the Armagnac and Bigorre as a dowry; and that celebrated princeſs, ſo well known for her genius and writings, died at the "Chateau d'Odos," only a league from Tarbes, in 1549.

I croſſed all Armagnac to this city, and arrived here the third of November. Toulouſe is the moſt diſagreeable and ill built place I have ſeen in France. It is a vaſt labyrinth, compoſed of ſtreets ſo crooked, narrow and winding, that it requires a clue to conduct a ſtranger through them. No ſquares, or public places, adorned with elegant buildings, as at Nantes or Bourdeaux, though it equals this laſt in ſize. I almoſt accuſe myſelf for having remained ſix days in a city, which preſents ſcarce any thing to the eye or underſtanding; and where the imagination cannot even receive that pleaſing ſenſation which reſults from viſiting the ſpot where great actions have been performed in paſt ages. The annals of Toulouſe are marked with little beſides acts of cruelty or ſuperſtition; the death of a Montmorenci, and the execution of a Calas.

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The cathedral is by no means a ſplendid pile of architecture. It was erected by Raymond the ſixth about the year 1200. You will recollect that Languedoc was governed during ſeveral centuries by counts. Jane, the daughter and heireſs of Raymond the ſeventh, was married to Alfonſo, brother of Lewis the ninth, and by the death of theſe two princes, who expired within a few days of each other at Savona in Italy, immediately after St. Louis's miſerable cruſade and ſiege of Tunis, the county of Toulouſe was united to the crown of France in 1271.

The tomb of Pibrac, whoſe name is ſo often mentioned under Henry the third, is in the church "de grands Auguſtins." This grave magiſtrate became amorous of the ſecond Margaret, queen of Navarre, and ſacrificed, as hiſtory declares, at the treaty of Nerac, his public duties to his attachment for that princeſs. In a hiſtory of this city which I procured on my arrival, a curious anecdote occurs relating

to

to Margaret. —— Catherine of Medicis, ſays the author, after the conference of Nerac, retired to Toulouſe, carrying with her the queen of Navarre, who was tired of her huſband and chagrined at his amours. The court, deſpairing of the queen of France's pregnancy, who had been married five years to Henry the third, was very deſirous that Margaret might have children. Catherine, her mother, ever addicted to aſtrology, having heard that there reſided at Caſtelnaudari, a woman famous for her ſkill in telling fortunes, and prying into futurity, went thither with her daughter to conſult this "Di-"ſeure de bonne aventure." The princeſs was ſubmitted in a ſtate of nudity to the old woman's inſpection, who examined all the parts of her perſon with extreme accuracy, and particularly thoſe on which her judgment muſt naturally depend. She then returned this plain anſwer to the queen, with certain medicines which ſhe had compoſed. "Madame, votre fille eſt "d'une très-bonne conſtitution, et je me "promets

" promets un bon ſuccès de mon re-
" mede, pourvu qu'elle puiſſe gagner
" ſur elle de ſe tenir *chaſte*, tout le
" tems qui eſt marqué dans le regime;
" car j'apprends que vous êtes mere et
" fille de grandes *coureuſes*." Apparently Margaret, whoſe conſtitution was of the moſt amorous, found too great a difficulty in ſubmitting to a preſcription which precluded her thoſe pleaſures ſhe loved; nor could the perſon conſulted have found out any better means of preſerving her credit, than by laying her royal patient under an injunction, which the knowledge ſhe had of her character and complexion, rendered it very certain ſhe would infringe.

Toulouſe has ſome internal commerce by means of the famous canal cut to join the two ſeas, which opens into the Garonne juſt above the city, and conveys all the articles of trade from Cette to Bourdeaux, acroſs Languedoc and Guyenne. This communication is how-

ever of little advantage to the place, which owes all its gaiety to the parliament, and the Provincial nobleſſe, who reſide here in winter. I leave it this afternoon, and am meanwhile,

Yours, &c.

Beziers,

Beziers, Monday, 13th November, 1775.

I Quitted Toulouſe laſt Thurſday, and ſlept at Caſtelnaudari, which is near forty miles diſtant: it is a tolerable town, and ſituate on the royal canal. The Saracens who conquered this part of France during the decay of the empire, are ſaid to have been its founders. About half a mile from the place, in a hollow valley between two riſing grounds, is the ſpot where the unfortunate duke of Montmorenci, cover'd with wounds, and thrown from his horſe, was taken priſoner. I lamented as I ſtood on it, the fate of ſo good and amiable a prince. He was the Ruſſel of France, who fell a ſacrifice to the ſtern and unrelenting policy of Richlieu. The grandſon of that Montmorenci, who expired in arms for the defence of the monarchy, at ſeventy-ſeven years of age; ſon to Henry d'Amville, conſtable under Henry the fourth; he himſelf of a character the moſt elevated, munifi-

cent, and benevolent; leſs guilty, even in his oppoſition to government, than Gaſton duke of Orleans; and, though enemy of the miniſter, guiltleſs of rebellion againſt his ſovereign.—How many circumſtances to extenuate his crime! I cannot but regard this execution as one of thoſe which tarniſh in the higheſt degree the great name of Richlieu, and, amid all the ſplendor of his actions, force us to abhor the man.

It is about five-and-twenty miles from Caſtelnaudari to Carcaſſonne, where I ſtaid the remainder of the enſuing day. Carcaſſonne conſiſts of two diſtinct cities, ſeparated by the little river Aude. The moſt ancient of theſe, called "La Haute Ville" ſtands on the ſummit of a hill; the lower town which is in the plain, is of ſuperior ſize, and both are ſurrounded with Gothic walls, battlements and turrets, in the moſt perfect preſervation. This place bore a conſiderable ſhare in that celebrated cruſade undertaken againſt the Albigeois in the beginning of the thirteenth

teenth century, and which forms one of the moſt aſtoniſhing diſplays of ſuperſtition and groſs barbarity, to be found in the annals of the world.

During the reigns of the laſt kings of the Carlovingian race, when the royal power was nearly annihilated by their weakneſs, moſt of the cities in Languedoc erected themſelves into little independent ſtates, governed by their own princes. Carcaſſonne was under the dominion of Viſcounts. At the time when pope Innocent the third patronized and commanded the commiſſion of hoſtilities againſt theſe unhappy heretics, Raymond the reigning Viſcount was included in the number. Simon de Montfort, general of the army of the church, inveſted the city in 1209. Terrified at the fate of ſeveral other places where the moſt horrible maſſacres had been committed, the inhabitants demanded to capitulate; but this act of grace was only extended to them under a condition, equally cruel, unparalleled, and incredible, if the unanimous teſtimony of

all the cotemporary writers did not force us to believe it. The people found in the place, were all obliged without diſtinction of rank or ſex, to go out perfectly naked; Agnez the Viſcounteſs, was not exempted, though young and beautiful, from this ignominious and ſhocking puniſhment. "On les fit ſortir tout nuds de la Ville de "Carcaſſonne (ſays an ancient author) "afin qu'ils receuſſent de la honte, en "montrant ces parties du corps que la "pureté de la langue n'exprime point, "deſquelles ils avoient abuſé, et s'en étoi-"ent ſervis dans des crimes execrables." It ſeems by this, that the Albigeois were accuſed by their enemies of ſome enormities, probably feigned; and ſimilar to thoſe which religious enmity and prejudice has attributed to the followers of Zinzendorf in the preſent century.

I continued my journey Saturday to Narbonne; the country from Toulouſe to the gates of that city is very unpleaſant; it is a plain, open, naked, and in many parts, barren; ſcarce a tree is to

be ſeen, except olives, and thoſe neither large nor numerous. On one hand appear the Pyrenees at a conſiderable diſtance, and on the other, the chain of rocks, called the Black Mountains, which divide Languedoc from the province of Rouergue. The weather was cold, and I found it difficult to procure a miſerable fire made of vine twigs, and roots of olives. The population is very thin likewiſe, and the appearance of every thing bleak and inhoſpitable. I went about a league out of the road near Carcaſſonne, to a little town called Trebé, where the canal paſſes over the river Aude, and got to Narbonne in the afternoon.

I muſt own I was infinitely diſappointed in that city, which retains ſcarce any veſtiges of its ancient grandeur. Narbonne, which pretends to the moſt remote antiquity under the Celtic kings, in ages previous to the Roman conqueſts; which under theſe latter maſters, gave its name to all the "Gallia Narbonenſis," and was a colony of the firſt conſideration, is now

dwindled to a wretched, ſolitary town, containing ſcarce eight thouſand perſons, of whom three fourths are prieſts and women. The ſtreets and buildings are mean and ruinous: it has a communication with the Mediterranean, from which it is about three leagues diſtant, by a ſmall river which interſects the place; but their commerce is very limited, and chiefly conſiſts in ſome grain which they export to Cette and Marſeilles. No marks remain of Roman magnificence, except ſeveral inſcriptions in different parts of the city; and if the churches did not keep employed ſome hundred eccleſiaſtics, who are occupied in the ſalutary and beneficial duties of chanting requiems and veſpers, it would probably ceaſe in a few years to exiſt at all.

The See is ſaid to have been founded by Charlemagne, but the preſent cathedral is much more modern; only the choir remains, which is in the fineſt ſtyle of the Gothic edifices. In the center, before the high altar, is the tomb of Phi-

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lip the Bold. It is composed of white marble: the king is represented in an extended posture, his head reposing on a cushion powdered with fleurs de lis. The face is that of a man in the prime of life, the features regular and pleasing; he has a beard on the upper lip and chin, and his hair floats in great quantity on his neck. In his right hand is the dalmatique, resembling a pastoral staff; and in the left he holds a sceptre, and a hand of justice. He has a regal crown on his head, and his feet rest on a lion. Behind, in the old black letter is this inscription.

"Sepultura bonæ Memoriæ
"Philippi,
"quondam Francorum Regis,
"Filii beati Ludovici,
"qui Perpignani calida Febre
"ab hac Luce migravit,
"3 Non: Octobris,
"Anno Dni 1285."

You may perhaps recollect that Philip died at forty-five years of age, on his return from an ill concerted and unfortunate

nate expedition againſt the king of Arragon. The body was brought here from Perpignan, and the bones having been ſeparated by boiling water from the fleſh, were carried to St. Denis and interred there.

The diſtance from Narbonne to this city is twenty miles. The mountain of Malpas, which was cut through, to admit the paſſage of the royal Canal, lies only a mile out of the road. It was impoſſible to paſs ſo extraordinary a work without viſiting it. The effect produced on the ſpectator is ſublime in the higheſt degree: a large flight of ſteps at either end, permits of gratifying curioſity by the minuteſt ſurvey of it. I deſcended into the excavation, and walked through the mountain along the ſide of the canal. The length of it, is exactly two hundred and ten paces, or more than ſix hundred feet; and the perpendicular heighth from the water to the ſurface of the incumbent earth, is two hundred and two feet. A great part of the mountain has been vault-

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ed at a vaſt expence, in the apprehenſion of its falling, from the prodigious weight; and the annual repairs neceſſary to it amount to a large ſum. The breadth of the canal itſelf is at leaſt twenty feet; and though the diſtance hollowed through the ground is ſo conſiderable, yet the light is perfectly admitted. This was the greateſt obſtacle to the completion of the junction of the two ſeas; and its execution has immortalized the famous Riquet, whom Louis the fourteenth employed in the enterprize. He was made Count de Caraman, and his deſcendants yet enjoy the title.

I arrived here laſt night. Beziers is an opulent and conſiderable city, containing above twenty thouſand inhabitants, and ſituated in a delicious country. It covers all the ſides of a very ſteep and lofty hill, on the higheſt point of which is built the cathedral. At the foot rolls the river Orbe. The proſpect is extenſive and beautiful, bounded to the north by mountains, and terminated on the ſouth by

by the Mediterranean. It is accounted one of the moſt plentiful and eligible places of reſidence in the kingdom, all the neceſſaries and elegancies of the table being procurable, and at the moſt moderate prices.

Béziers is ſaid to have been a "Statio "Romana," and uſed by them as a place of arms. The ſiege was one of the moſt memorable and bloody which happened during the cruſade againſt the Albigenſes. The garriſon defended it with determined bravery; and every other means being unequal to their reduction, it was reſolved to ſtorm it. The papal Nuncio, aſſiſted by Guſman the Spaniard, better known under the name of St. Dominic, exhorted the troops to behave with courage in this pious enterprize, and promiſed them remiſſion from all their paſt offences. After a long and obſtinate ſtruggle, the city was entered by the victorious ſoldiery, who maſſacred, in cold blood, ſixty thouſand of the wretched inhabitants, without diſtinction of ſex, rank, or age, and

afterwards

afterwards reduced it to aſhes. I leave it to your own generous and feeling mind, to make the natural reflections on this horrid cataſtrophe. I fear to permit myſelf to comment on ſuch an event, to which there are but too many ſimilar in the hiſtory of the Romiſh church. The form of that religion is doubtleſs unhappy and deſtructive to the human race, which nouriſhes in its eſſence the ſeeds of theological controverſy, and metaphyſical ſubtilties; which, though contemptible in themſelves, neceſſarily produce that ſpirit of intoleration and perſecution, that uniform experience proves to be the certain conſequence of a difference in opinion on ſacred ſubjects. Happy the Romans and the Greeks, who eſtabliſhed no cruſades to convert the provinces they ſubdued! who maſſacred no people for their adherence to the ſuperſtition of their anceſtors, who knew no points of ſcholaſtic or polemical divinity; but with open arms received the gods of the conquered nations, and admitted Iſis, and

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the dog Anubis, to a place in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus!

Edward the Black Prince laid ſiege to Beziers in 1355, but without ſucceſs. He ravaged all this part of Languedoc, and advanced even as far as Fabrigues, a little town at two leagues diſtant from Montpelier. There he halted; and whether from an apprehenſion of being intercepted in his retreat, or his army being ſatiated with booty, began his march back. He burnt the ſuburbs of Narbonne and Carcaſſonne on his way, ſpread terror through all the neighbouring provinces, and brought his ſoldiers in triumph to Bourdeaux, laden with ſpoils.

The cathedral contains nothing remarkable, except the tomb of Blanche of France. Philip of Valois, her father, became enamoured, at the age of fifty-ſix, of Blanche d'Evreux, the moſt beautiful princeſs in Europe. She was only ſixteen years old; but this diſproportion did not prevent the nuptials. The King enjoyed his bride a very ſhort time;

time; he died the enſuing year, of the ſame diſeaſe which proved fatal to Louis the twelfth, and to Don John, ſon to Ferdinand and Iſabel of Spain. The queen was left with child, and lay in ſome months afterwards of the princeſs Blanche. When ſhe had attained her twentieth year, ſhe was betrothed to the Count of Barcelona, and died at this city, on her journey into Catalonia.

I leave Beziers this afternoon. Meanwhile, adieu!

Taraſcon

Tarascon on the Rhone,
Tuesday, 21st November, 1775.

MONTPELIER is a delicious place of residence. I staid there four days, and quitted it with extreme regret. The town itself is by no means handsome, the streets being almost all narrow, and badly laid out; but Nature seems to have chosen the hill on which it stands, to enrich with her choicest favours. The ascent is easy and gradual on every side; and the states of Languedoc have ornamented the summit of it at a vast expence, in a manner where taste and magnificence are equally blended.

The prospect from this happy spot I cannot describe, though I studied it every day with an enthusiastic pleasure. Raphael's pencil, or Lorraine's, might paint it, but even Shakespeare's colouring must do injustice to its beauties. The vales of Languedoc, covered with olives, or laid out in vineyards, are contrasted with ridg rocks

rocks to the north, and die away into the ſea to the ſouth. Though winter has almoſt ſtripped the trees of their verdure, there is nothing melancholy or deſart which preſents itſelf to the eye. A ſky ſerene and unclouded, an invigorating ſun, a keen and wholeſome air, ſpread a gaiety over November itſelf, which here is neither accompanied with fogs nor rain. Montpelier has notwithſtanding loſt, within theſe thirty years, that vogue which conduces more to the ſupport of a place, than any real advantages it may poſſeſs in point of ſalubrity; and the number of ſtrangers who viſit it from that motive is diminiſhed annually. Some trade is ſtill carried on by a ſmall river, called the Les, which empties itſelf into the ſea, about a league off; but the Mediterranean has been retiring theſe three centuries from the whole coaſt of Languedoc and Provence. Frejus, between Toulon and Antibes, where the Emperor Auguſtus laid up his gallies after the battle of Actium, is now an inland city.

You doubtleſs remember the celebrated interview of Charles the fifth and Francis the firſt at Aigues-mortes. It is at preſent half a league from the ſhore, and has, of conſequence, loſt all its ancient commerce, which was very extenſive. This event, which took place early in the laſt century, induced the Cardinal de Richlieu, ever attentive to the grandeur and emolument of the ſtate, to conſtruct a port at Agde, which he effected. The remedy was only temporary, as the cauſe ſtill ſubſiſted; and before the year 1670 Agde was rendered almoſt uſeleſs. Colbert then undertook to build the town of Cette, at which place all the commodities brought down the royal canal might be exported, and the province of Languedoc ſupplied with a port, of which otherwiſe it is totally deſtitute. A gentleman here has aſſured me, that the neceſſity alone of having a maritime town at the mouth of the canal, has hitherto prevented Cette from ſharing the fate of its predeceſſors, as the annual expence of clearing the

harbour

harbour amounts to a hundred thouſand livres; and even theſe precautions cannot hinder the ſand from obſtructing the entrance, and forming a bar acroſs it, in a ſeries of years. Montpelier owes its chief elevation to this very circumſtance. The epiſcopal ſee was originally at Maguelonne, a place on the ſea-ſhore; but which declining, from the retreat of the water, Pope Paul the third transferred it there, in 1536.

It is a garden from Montpelier to Niſmes, flat, and every where cultivated. The peaſants are juſt beginning to gather their olives, which are amazingly numerous, and the trees planted with the ſame regularity as the orchards in England. I cannot but envy the inhabitants this genial climate, and theſe fertile plains, and am ready to accuſe Nature of partiality in the infinite difference ſhe has put between the Languedocian and the Swediſh peaſant. In vain will you tell me the "Amor "Patriæ," the attachment we bear to that country where we were born, renders them

equally happy, and obliterates or extinguiſhes all other diſtinctions. I know the force of this principle; I feel it in my own boſom; I cultivate it with the greateſt ardour—but it cannot blind me to the infinite ſuperiority which certain regions of the earth are endowed with above the reſt.

I ſpent three days at Niſmes in the ſurvey of thoſe magnificent and beautiful remains of the Roman greatneſs which yet ſubſiſt. They have been deſcribed a thouſand times; and it is not my intention to trouble you with a repetition of them. The Amphitheatre, and the "maiſon quarrée," are known through every kingdom of Europe. The firſt impreſſes with the deepeſt veneration; the latter excites the moſt elegant and refined delight. Indignation againſt the barbarians, who could violate and deface theſe glorious productions of antiquity, will mingle with the ſenſations of every beholder. One can ſcarce believe that Charles Martel, from hatred to the Ro-

man name, had the ſavage fury to fill the corridores of the amphitheatre with wood, to which he ſet fire, with the intention to injure, though it ſurpaſſed his power to demoliſh, ſo vaſt an edifice. Yet even in deſpite of theſe attempts of barbarous nations, of the lapſe of ſo many ages, and inclemency of elements; its appearance at this time is the moſt auguſt which can be preſented to the mind. The prodigious circumference, the ſolidity and durability of its conſtruction, the awful majeſty of ſo vaſt a pile, half perfect, half in ruin, impreſs with a tumult of ſentiments hard to be transfuſed by any deſcription. The "maiſon quarrée," is in far ſuperior preſervation. It appears to me to be the moſt perfect piece of architecture in the world. The order is the Corinthian, and all the laboured beauties of that ſtyle ſeem to be exhauſted in its conſtruction. I bluſh for the bigotry and mean ſuperſtition which has converted this ſuperb temple into a chapel of the Virgin, decked out with

crucifixes, gilding, and Catholic pageantry.

At a quarter of a mile from the town of Niſmes, is another temple, far gone in a ſtate of decay. Immemorial tradition declares that it was conſecrated to Diana; but it is generally ſuppoſed to have been ſacred to the "Dii infernales," as it is apparent that no light was admitted into it. In the inſide, are numbers of mutilated ſtatues, marbles, capitals, and inſcriptions, which have been found from time to time. Cloſe to it, riſes a fountain, which may vie with that of Vaucluſe in beauty, though not in fame. It is of a prodigious ſize, and never diminiſhes in the longeſt droughts. As the channel through which it flows had become obſtructed in a ſeries of ages by ſand and gravel, the inhabitants of the city undertook ſome years ago to clean and renew it. In the courſe of this work, they diſcovered a number of Roman coins, rings, and other antiquities, ſeveral of which are highly preſerved, and exceedingly

exceedingly rare. On the ſummit of the rock from whence iſſues the fountain, ſtands a building which has much exerciſed the opinions of the learned. It is Roman, and vulgarly called "La Tour "magne." Its expoſed ſituation has peculiarly conduced to haſten its decay. At what time it was erected, or to what purpoſes it ſerved, are now equally unknown.

Niſmes is an ill built and diſagreeable place, containing in itſelf nothing extraordinary or remarkable. A hundred fables are related concerning its origin, which is carried into times anterior by many centuries to the Roman conqueſts. It probably does not occupy at preſent the fourth part of the ground on which it formerly ſtood. I left it at two o'clock this afternoon. The diſtance is only twenty miles; but the wind blew ſuch a hurricane, as I ſcarce ever remember. The paſſage acroſs the Rhone, which divides Provence from Languedoc at this place, is over a bridge of boats; and I own I paſſed it with ſome apprehenſions,

as they assure me it is not uncommon for carriages to be carried over into the river by a violent gust of wind.

The view of the Rhone is very picturesque. On one side, in Languedoc, stands Beaucaire, a considerable town, with a ruined castle overhanging a rock: on this is situate Tarascon, with a corresponding castle, much more considerable, and washed by the waves. The river is far broader than the Thames at London.

To-morrow I proceed for Aix and Marseilles. Farewell!

Marseilles,

Marſeilles, 5th January, 1776.

I ſcarce ever remember in our northern climate, a colder day than that on which I continued my journey from Tarafcon to this city. Winter ſeem'd to have taken poſſeſſion of the face of nature before its time. The olive trees were covered with ſnow, which fell very faſt, and the blaze which blew in my face, and came from the ſummit of the Alps, rendered the weather extremely ſevere.—At St. Remi, a little town only four leagues from Tarafcon, I drove about a mile out of the road, to ſee the remains of Marius's trophies over the Cimbri and Teutones. Though ſo many ages have rolled on ſince their conſtruction, they yet forcibly recall the idea of Rome, the conqueror of the earth.

It was night when I arrived at Aix, where I ſtaid three days. The city has that air of ſilence and gloom ſo commonly characteriſtic of places devoid either of commerce or induſtry,

induſtry, and forms a moſt ſtriking contraſt to Marſeilles, where opulence and population are univerſally viſible. The warm ſprings which render it celebrated, induced Sextius Calvinus to found a Roman colony there, to which he gave the name of "Aquæ Sextiæ." They were ſuppoſed, probably with reaſon, to poſſeſs particular virtues in caſes of impotence or debility; and ſeveral altars have been dug up ſacred to Priapus, the inſcriptions on which indicate their gratitude to that Deity for his apprehended ſuccour and aſſiſtance. I ſaw nothing in the cathedral deſerving attention, except the tomb of Charles of Anjou, laſt of the great Angevin line, Kings of Naples, and Counts of Provence. He died, if I recollect right, in 1483, and left both his actual and pretended dominions to Louis the eleventh, king of France. The latter claims on the Neapolitan crown were the foundation of thoſe long and unhappy wars begun by Charles the eighth, and perpetuated under his ſucceſſor.

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It is only twenty miles from Aix to this city.—There is notwithſtanding, a conſiderable difference in the climate of Marſeilles, which is rendered milder in winter, and cooler during the heats of ſummer, from its vicinity to the Mediterranean. Nature ſeems eminently to have marked out the place for commerce, by the advantages ſhe has beſtowed on it. The entrance of the harbour, which is extremely narrow, and ſurrounded by lofty mountains, ſhelters and protects the veſſels during the moſt violent ſtorms. The port itſelf forms a delightful walk at this ſeaſon of the year, as it is open to the ſouthern ſun, and crowded with an aſſemblage not only of all the European nations, but of Turks, Greeks, and natives of the coaſt of Barbary. The "coup d'œil" is one of the moſt agreeable to be imagined, if the chains of the galley ſlaves, heard among the hum of buſineſs, did not tincture it with the hateful idea of ſlavery. The gallies themſelves uſeleſs and neglected, rot peaceably in

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their reſpective ſtations; and it is ſaid, that no others will ever be conſtructed, to ſupply their place, as they have long ceaſed to be of any utility to the ſtate, and are ſcarcely navigable in ſevere weather.

In the ſhort reſidence I have made here, I am yet forcibly ſtruck with the wide difference, and almoſt abſolute diſſimilarity in the genius of the Provencaux, from that generally attributed to the French. The common people have a brutality and rudeneſs of manners more characteriſtic of a republican, than a monarchical and abſolute government. Their language, ſo famous in ancient romance, is a corrupt Italian, more intelligible to a Neapolitan than a Pariſian. The women are lively, beautiful, and diſpoſed from complexion to gallantry. A fire, an extreme vivacity unknown to all the northern nations, and which reſults from a penetrating air, a genial ſun, and ſkies for ever blue, is eminently diſcernible in their eyes, their converſation, the peculiar dances and muſic of the country, in all which

which a warm and impaſſioned animation forms the predominant quality. I fear to expreſs how many charms there are in this gaiety of character and diſpoſition, leſt you ſhould think I mean to contraſt it with the etiquette of our own kingdom, where we ſeldom allow the heart to act uninfluenced by the judgment, or baniſh reflection and philoſophy from the ſcene of elegant diſſipation.

Marſeilles pretends to remote antiquity. A colony of Phocians, in ages unknown, is ſaid to have given it birth. The old city is one of the moſt naſty and ill built in Europe. I have never had courage enough to penetrate into its receſſes, which are inſupportably filthy. The modern Marſeilles has ſprung up ſince the commencement of the eighteenth century, and has all that regularity, elegance, and convenience, which diſtinguiſh the preſent times. I am inclined to conſider it as one of the moſt eligible places of winter reſidence in the world, and far ſuperior, where health is not an object of attention,

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to Nice or Montpelier. In the carnival, I am aſſured, it is uncommonly gay. The ſurrounding country is rocky and barren, but covered for ſeveral miles, on all ſides, with villas and ſummer houſes, which commerce has erected.

My intention of viſiting Corſica and Sardinia I have relinquiſhed, on account of the barbariſm in which both thoſe iſlands are plunged, and the few objects of entertainment or information they offer to a liberal mind. I have determined to remain here till the enſuing ſpring, when I ſhall probably return through the inland Provinces to England. Meanwhile, I remain, &c.

Clermont,

Clermont in Auvergne,
Friday, 26th of April, 1776.

AFTER a ſilence of near four months, I again reſume my pen from among the mountains of Auvergne, at the diſtance of more than a hundred leagues from Marſeilles. I have exchanged the delicious climate of Provence, its warm ſun, and the ſhore of the Mediterranean, for a very different ſcene.

I quitted Marſeilles on the ſixth of this month, and got to Avignon the evening of the enſuing day. It was impoſſible not to dedicate ſome time to the view of a city ſo renowned in paſt ages, the ſeat of the ſovereign Pontiffs during more than half a century, the reſidence of a Petrarch, and the birth-place of Laura. I felt that pleaſure which reſults to every reflective mind, from the conſciouſneſs of being on the ſpot immortaliz'd by poetry, or genius, or great atchievements. I compared Avignon as it now exiſts, with the picture

ture which Petrarch has drawn of it in his writings, and attempted to aſcertain the ſituation of his miſtreſs's abode, which tradition yet points out in one of the ſuburbs. I went to the church of the Cordeliers, where reſt her remains. In a little dark chapel on the right hand, now diſuſed for religious ceremonies, damp, cold, and unwholſome, beneath the arch which forms the entrance, and under a plain ſtone, lies that Laura, once ſo beautiful, and who can never die while her lover's fame and productions ſurvive. Round the ſtone are ſome ancient Gothic characters covered with dirt, and rendered illegible by time. You will perhaps recollect that Francis the firſt, the moſt accompliſhed prince who ever reigned in France, and who eminently poſſeſs'd that enthuſiaſm which uſually diſtinguiſhes and characteriſes genius, cauſed the tomb to be opened in his own preſence. His wiſh to pierce the obſcurity in which Petrarch has affected to involve the name of his miſtreſs, and his own unhappy paſſion;

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a deſire to aſcertain by ſome inconteſtable mark the burial-place of Laura, were the motives which influenced him. Some ſmall human bones, ſuppoſed to be her's, and a leaden box containing a ſcrowl of Italian verſes, obſcurely diſcloſing Petrarch's attachment to her, were all which repaid the monarch's curioſity. I doubt not it is needleſs to remind you, that Laura died of the plague, which deſolated all Europe in 1347 and the following year, and of which Boccace has drawn the moſt animated, terrifying, and diſtreſsful picture which can be held up to the imagination of man.

It ſeems impoſſible to recognize the ſituation, or adjacent country of Avignon, as they exiſt at preſent, in the melancholy colours with which Petrarch has ſhaded them. The fertile plain of the "Com-"tat Venaiſſin" in which it ſtands, the rich banks of the Rhone are deſcribed by him as a frightful deſart, through which pours a river infeſted by continual wind and tempeſts. Ovid has given us the ſame

horrible idea of the coaſt of the Black Sea, a climate inconteſtably one of the fineſt on the earth, and bleſſed with an almoſt continual ſpring. The gloomy medium through which the two poets beheld every object, explains this extraordinary enigma. The latter, only occupied with the painful recollection of the luxurious pleaſures which reigned in the court of Auguſtus, and from which he was for ever baniſhed, was dead to every ſenſe of joy or delight. Petrarch, an exile from his native country, ever cheriſhing the fond idea of reviſiting Florence, and deſpiſing the manners, while he deteſted the city of Avignon, knew no bounds to his exclamations and complaints. Neither the diſtinguiſhed favour of ſeveral ſucceeding popes, with which he was honour'd, nor the conſideration of its being the ſpot which gave his miſtreſs birth, could ſoften or diminiſh the acrimony of his hatred to it.—For me, who viewed it impartially, and diveſted of prejudice, I was charmed with the ſituation. The view from the ſummit of the rock in

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the center of the city is delicious. The *Bize* indeed incommoded me extremely; but I comforted myself, that tho' piercing, it was yet wholesome; and that if Louis the eleventh, in a state of debility, had ordered intercessions to Heaven to avert it, Augustus, on the other hand, was so well convinced of its salubrious and invigorating qualities, that he erected an altar to it, and ordered it to be placed among the Gods.

The Rhone itself is a noble object, rolling rapidly through meadows covered with olive trees, and divided into two channels opposite to Avignon. Across it extend the ruinous and decayed arches of that bridge, against which Madame de Grignan was so near being lost, and of which Madame de Sevigné makes frightful mention. It was demolished in 1699, by one of the inundations common to the Rhone. When entire, it was not less than a quarter of a mile in length; but its extreme narrowness, which did not permit two carriages to pass in any part,

had almoſt rendered it previouſly uſeleſs; and motives of policy prevent the erection of a new one, as Avignon ſtill belongs to the papal ſee.——On the farther ſide, in Languedoc ſtands Ville Neuve, a conſiderable town, with a magnificent monaſtery of Benedictins, on a rock correſpondent to that where is built the cathedral of Avignon. The high mountain of Ventoux en Dauphiné, covered with ſnow, and which Petrarch has deſcribed, appears to the north, and the ſavage rocks of Vaucluſe bound the view to the eaſtward, at the diſtance of fifteen miles. Beneath ſpreads a lovely vale, water'd by ſeveral rivulets which loſe themſelves in the Rhone, and cultivated with the moſt laborious induſtry.

The city itſelf is in general ill built, irregular, and devoid of beauty; but the Gothic walls and ramparts with which it has been ſurrounded by different pontiffs, remain in high preſervation. I recollect none ſo perfect in any part of France. Several popes and antipopes repoſe

poſe in the churches of the place; and in that of the Cordeliers, almoſt oppoſite to Laura's, is the tomb of Grillon, ſo well known for his gallant and invincible courage, for his loyal and unſhaken attachment to Henry the fourth.

You will not doubt that I viſited the fountain of Vaucluſe, immortaliz'd by Petrarch, and to which he ſo often retired to indulge his grief and hopeleſs love. I did ſo, nor is the lively impreſſion it made on my imagination in any degree eraſed. It is only five leagues diſtant from Avignon, and as I ſet out early in the morning, I reached the entrance of the valley about ten o'clock. I got out of the carriage, and walked ſlowly along the banks of the Sorgue, for ſo the river is called, formed by the fountain. Meadows of the moſt vivid green cover either ſide of it, over which riſe abrupt and lofty rocks, which ſeem deſigned to ſeclude it from human view. The valley becomes more and more narrow toward the extremity, and winding continually, deſcribes the figure of a

horſe-ſhoe. The view is at length terminated by an enormous maſs of rock, forming a barrier acroſs it, of a prodigious heighth, and abſolutely perpendicular. Through its vaſt receſſes run the ſtreams which ſupply the fountain; and at its foot appears a baſon of water, ſeveral hundred feet in circumference, ſtretched like a ſheet, ſilent and quiet. The ſides deſcend with great rapidity, and it is ſaid that in the middle no bottom is diſcoverable, though it has been often attempted—a circumſtance probably reſulting from the violence with which the ſprings bubble up, which prevent any weight let down into it from deſcending beyond a certain depth. —Tho' clearer in itſelf than chryſtal, yet the incumbent rock caſts a continual ſhade, approaching to black, over its ſurface. The water eſcaping from this ſtate of inaction by a narrow paſſage, is immediately precipitated in a caſcade down a rocky channel, where it foams over a number of vaſt, detached ſtones, which intercept and impede its progreſs. They

are covered with a deep green moſs of many ages, and have probably tumbled from the mountains which overhang the torrent. The rocks themſelves, which ſurround and inveſt this romantic ſpot, are worn by time, and the inclemency of elements, into a thouſand extraordinary forms, to which fancy attaches ſhape and figure. On one of the pointed extremities in a ſituation which appears almoſt inacceſſible, are beheld the remains of an ancient caſtle, projecting over the water. It completes the wondrous ſcene, and leaves ſcarce any picturesque object wanting, which could have been preſented to the view. The peaſants call it "Il caſ-"tello di Petrarca;" and add, with infinite ſimplicity, that Laura lived on the oppoſite ſide of the river, under the bed of which was a ſubterraneau paſſage, by which the two lovers viſited each other. Nothing is however more certain, than that theſe ruins are thoſe of the Chateau belonging to the lords or Seigneurs of Avignon. The biſhop of Cavaillon, in the

frequent visits which he used to make to Petrarch, resided there.—The pottle dwelling was much lower down, nearer to the margin of the Sorgue, as evidently appears from his minute description of it, and his quarrel with the Naiads of the stream, who encroached during the winter on his little adjoining territory. No vestiges of it are now discernible.

I sat me down on the verge of the basson, to consider the scene around, and this romantic assemblage of objects which presented themselves on every side. I regarded with a mixt sensation of pleasure and of pain, the valley and the fountains which had been witnesses to Petrarch's complaints, and hopeless passion. I attempted to discern the cavern, which, during the summer, when the waters of Vaucluse are low, admits into the bowels of the rock, and where he used to enter alone in the dead of night to indulge his despair in that frightful seclusion. While I was engaged in these reflections, the day darkened in, and a sudden storm

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of rain, from which I was completely sheltered by the incumbent mountain, issuing from a collection of black clouds overhanging the spot, spread through the whole landscape a majestic and awful sublimity. When it was past, I retir'd, tho' with slow and reluctant steps, from this lovely and celebrated solitude.

Before I got into my carriage, the peasant who had conducted me to the fountain, carried me to a house situated in the valley, where are still preserved two portraits of the lovers, who have conduced to render Vaucluse immortal. My whole attention was directed to that of Laura. She appears in the earliest bloom of youth, such as she is described by Petrarch on that morning when he first beheld her. A certain air of playful gaiety seems spread over her countenance. Her eyes are large and of a deep hazel, the nose justly proportioned, and the contour of her face a faultless oval. Her hair is confined by a fillet, braided and adorned with pearls; its colour approaches to yellow. Over

her neck is a faint shade of gauze; her robe is of a pale red, and her arms are covered with a sort of glove which descends half way the hands. In one of them she holds an amaranth, emblematic of immortality. —— Petrarch is depictur'd as in middle life, of an engaging figure, and his brows bound with laurel.

I return'd to Avignon in the evening, and quitted it on the morning of the ensuing day. At Orange where I breakfasted it was impossible not to dedicate an hour to the remains of the Roman theatre, and the triumphal arch of Marius, edifices the most august and magnificent, although deformed by the lapse of near two thousand years, and of which I should perhaps give you a description, if it had not already been done by preceding travellers. —— I continued my journey along the eastern bank of the Rhone. On the other side appear the high mountains of the Vivarais covered with snow, and to the right are those of Dauphiné extending to the Alps, with which they mingle. As I advanced

north, the climate became more rude and piercing; the Bize blew with a redoubled keenneſs, and chilled the ſpring juſt opening. I arrived at Lyons after three days journey. My road from thence to this city, lay through the provinces of Beaujolois and Forez; the firſt of theſe, though hilly, is finely cultivated. Between Lyons and Roanne I paſſed the high mountain of Tarare, ſo dreaded in the laſt century. From the ſummit is a prodigious proſpect, only bounded towards Savoy by the Alps, which form a vaſt barrier covered with eternal ſnow. At Roanne I enter'd the Forez, a ſmall province barren, uncultivated, and thinly inhabited. A chain of lofty hills, or rather mountains, extends acroſs it; thick foreſts of pine and fir cover the ſteep acclivities, and afford refuge to wolves and boars, which are found in great numbers. Scarce a hamlet is ſeen in ſeveral miles; and the ſilence, the depopulation, and romantic ſolitudes through which I paſs'd, ſtrongly reminded me of Sweden or Finland.

I arrived

I arrived at Thiers Wedneſday evening. It is a conſiderable town ſituated on the rapid deſcent of a mountain, from whence is beheld a moſt delicious landſcape. The country extends for many leagues, on all ſides, in a cultivated plain, terminated by another range of mountains. Clermont is diſtinctly ſeen at the diſtance of five-and-twenty miles. This rich track of the Auvergne is denominated "La Li-"magne." It is a baſon ſurrounded by rocks and hills. The ſoil is uncommonly exuberant, and inferior to no part of France. Several fine ſtreams water it, and add to the beauty of the ſcene.

I got to this city yeſterday. The ſituation is agreeable, on a little eminence, to which the acceſs is gradual and eaſy. The place itſelf ſeems to have been built in an age the moſt barbarous. The ſtreets are ſo narrow and winding, that no carriage can enter them, and the buildings correſpond to the other parts; but to compenſate for this inconvenience, the ſuburbs are charming, and the houſes modern

dern and elegant. I viſited this morning, the petrifying ſpring, which Charles the ninth is ſaid to have ſurveyed with ſo much wonder and pleaſure. It is only a quarter of a mile from the town. In a courſe of ages, it has formed a ridge of ſtone or incruſtation, not leſs than ſixteen feet in height, above a hundred feet long, and in ſome parts near ten in thickneſs. As it impeded, and at length totally ſtopped the current of a little rivulet which interſected its courſe, the inhabitants were obliged to dig a paſſage through it. The ſtream is now directed into another channel, and has begun to form a new bridge acroſs the rivulet into which it falls.

My intention was to have penetrated farther into this romantic province, but the ſeaſon is as yet too early, to permit of aſcending any of the higheſt mountains. I ſhould however certainly have gone to Uſſon, which is only ten leagues diſtant, if any remains of the caſtle ſtill exiſted. I need not remind you, that Margaret of Valois,

Valois, wife to Henry the fourth, was ſhut up in it during twenty years. A gentleman who reſides at Iſſoire near the ſpot, gave me this deſcription of it.

"The caſtle of Uſſon ſtood upon a rock "almoſt inacceſſible, at the foot of which "flowed a little river. The queen, by a "maſterly piece of addreſs, expelled the "Marquis de Canillac, and rendered her-"ſelf miſtreſs of the place. It has been "demoliſhed by time, and the avidity "of the neighbouring peaſants, who have "removed almoſt all the ſtones which "compoſed the caſtle. Some ruins yet "remain in the laſt ſtage of decay, which "the vulgar apprehend to have been "formerly ſacred to religious purpoſes, "and which they denominate, 'Les "Chapelles de la Reine Marguerite.' It "is true they were erected by the Queen; "but ſhe had dedicated them to plea-"ſure, not devotion, and gave ren-"dezvous in theſe apartments to the "neighbouring nobility of Auvergne.

"No

"No other traces remain at this time of "Uſſon."

My letter is already of an immoderate length; I ſhall only add to it, that I am yours, &c.

Bourges

Bourges in Berri, 6th of May, 1776.

I Left Clermont ſooner than I had intended, in compliance with an invitation which I could not refuſe, to ſpend ſome time at the Chateau de P—— belonging to the Count de L——. The houſe is ſituated in an unfrequented part of Auvergne, towards the confines of the Bourbonnois, on a riſing ground, which commands an enchanting proſpect. Through the plain beneath, flows the river Allier, mentioned in terms of ſuch lively admiration by Madame de Sevigné, and on whoſe banks, ſhe ſays, might yet be diſcovered ſome of the ſhepherds of fiction and romance. Monſieur de L—— was not at home, and I was received by the Counteſs in a manner the moſt noble and polite. She did me the honour to detain me five days, which I ſpent in ſuch a manner, as never to be eraſed from my remembrance. I could deſcribe to you

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her perſon, but that I ſhall give you a more juſt idea of it in ſaying it ſtrikingly reſembled the portrait of the ducheſs of Mazarin, as drawn by the Abbé de St. Real. Her other accompliſhments were not inferior to her beauty; and when ſhe danced the Bourrée, a dance peculiar to Auvergne, I thought Hortenſia Mancini was not comparable to Madame de L——. I took my leave with that reluctance natural to a perſon impreſſed with pleaſure and reſpect.

At Montpenſier, I alighted to view the mount, on which formerly ſtood the caſtle, now totally demoliſhed. It is rendered famous in hiſtory by the death of Louis the eighth, king of France, and father of St. Louis. He expired there, in 1226, on his return from the ſiege of Avignon, and as was ſuppoſed, of poiſon, adminiſtered to him by the Count de Champagne.

I arrived the enſuing day at Moulins. It ſtands in a fine plain, cloſe to the river Allier, along the ſides of which

are planted walks of elm, poplar and aſpin. The city, though capital of the province of Bourbonnois, is mean and ill built. I hurried away to look at the Mauſoleum of Henry Duke of Montmorenci, in the church of the nunnery of the Viſitation. It was erected to his memory by the Ducheſs Marie Felice des Urſins. I regarded this ſuperb monument with ſenſations of the deepeſt pity for the unfortunate hero to whom it was raiſed. Caſtelnaudari, and Leytoure, and Toulouſe crowded into my mind.—The tomb is compoſed of the moſt beautiful and coſtly marbles. The Duke appears in a repoſing attitude, his left arm ſupported on his helmet. By him ſits his widow, her eyes directed to heaven, her hands claſped, and through her whole figure an expreſſion of diſconſolate ſorrow ſtrongly marked.

It is a delightful ride from Moulins to Nevers, through the Bourbonnois and Nivernois. In the center of the city, on the ſummit of a hill, is built the palace

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of the ancient Dukes of Nevers. It appears to be a production of the ſixteenth century, and, though beginning to exhibit marks of decay, is yet a model of beauty and delicacy in Gothic architecture. The apartments are hung with tapeſtry of two hundred years, and through them is ſpread an air of groteſque and rude magnificence. I was detained in one of the chambers during ſome minutes, by a portrait of Madame de Monteſpan. She appears riſing from a ſuperb couch, the curtains of which are drawn back, and ſupported by Cupids. Her attitude is half voluptuous, half reflective. She is wrapped in a negligent deſhabille. Her hair floats down over her ſhoulders and neck in wanton ringlets. She reſts her head on her left hand. One of her feet is concealed by her robe; but the other, which is naked to the mid-leg, and on which the painter, with wondrous taſte, has exhauſted all his art, is placed on an embroidered cuſhion. Her ſlippers are

thrown careleſsly by. I was charmed with the piece.

I paſſed the Loire at La Charité, when I entered the province of Berri; the diſtance from thence to this city is about twelve leagues. The country is much inferior in beauty and cultivation to that between Moulins and Nevers. Thick woods or barren heaths deſtitute of inhabitants, conſtitute the far greater part. Bourges is ſituated in the midſt of a plain, open and level as the ſea. It is of a very conſiderable ſize, and of high antiquity. Moſt of the houſes forcibly evince this latter claim by the barbariſm of their conſtruction, which marks an age of extreme rudeneſs and unacquaintance with the arts. I have ſeen ſcarce an edifice which does not appear to have ſtood many hundred years.——The "Hotel de "Ville" was built by the celebrated Jacques Cueur, well known in the French hiſtory by his greatneſs, his exile, and misfortunes. Over the portal, is a fine

ſtatue

ſtatue of Charles the ſeventh, clad in complete armour, and mounted on horſe-back. That prince uſually held his court here; and you will certainly recollect, that during the extreme diſtreſs in which his affairs were involved at the commencement of his reign, the Engliſh, elated with their victories under Henry the fifth, beſtowed on him the contemptuous appellation of "Le petit Roi de Bourges," from the loyal and conſtant attachment which the citizens bore him.

The tower, denominated "La groſſe "tour," in which Louis the twelfth was detained a priſoner more than two years, by the Lady of Beaujeu, exiſts no longer. It was demoliſhed in 1651, by order of Cardinal Mazarin, during the minority of Louis the fourteenth, and a modern building has been conſtructed on the ſpot, of the ſtones which compoſed it.

I went to look at the tomb of Jane of Valois, daughter to Louis the eleventh, and wife to Louis the twelfth, whom he repudiated to marry Anne of Bretagne, on

his acceſſion to the crown. She retired to this city, and having dedicated her remaining days to piety, expired in the nunnery of St. Jane, which ſhe had founded. One of the nuns ſhewed me, through the grating, her ſlippers and nuptial robes, which are preſerved with great care; and ſhe added, that innumerable miracles had been wrought by her interceſſion and relics.

The cathedral is a moſt auguſt and magnificent edifice, though the external part of the building does not correſpond in beauty or ſymmetry to that within. It is of prodigious dimenſions, far exceeding any we have in England, and the quantity of painted glaſs is ſcarce inferior to that of Gouda in Holland. John duke of Berri, brother to Charles the fifth king of France, repoſes in the ſubterranean chapel beneath a marble tomb of coſtly workmanſhip. He is known in hiſtory under the unhappy reign of Charles the ſixth, when the frenzy with which that

prince

prince was ſeized left a full career to the intrigues and ambition of his uncles.

Scarce any other objects preſent themſelves to the eye in this city except ruins, and I am almoſt afraid as I walk thro' the narrow winding ſtreets, leſt the buildings ſhould fall upon my head. If Charles the ſeventh could revive, I am perſuaded he would perfectly recognize the place, which appears to have undergone very little alteration, or received any embelliſhment, in more than three centuries which have elapſed ſince his death.

Louis the eleventh was born at Bourges, and in the "Hotel de Ville" is a painting figurative of this event. France, under figurative of a woman, appears riſing from her throne to receive the medallion of that monarch, which is preſented to her by the Genius of Berri.

This province, though large and naturally fertile, is little cultivated or improved. This chiefly reſults from the want of a navigable river, by which the grain

and other productions might be transported to different quarters of the kingdom.

Tomorrow morning I leave Bourges. From Orleans or Blois you may expect to hear of Yours, &c.

Blois,

Blois, Tuesday, 14th May, 1776.

I staid some hours at Mehun-sur-Yeure in Berri, to contemplate the magnificent remains of the castle. It is only four leagues distant from Bourges, and is rendered famous in history by the death of Charles the seventh who constructed it, and who expired there by a voluntary abstinence from food, in the terror of being poison'd by his own son. The situation is not favour'd by nature, and corresponds ill to the grandeur of the structure. It stands in a wide-extended plain, sheltered by deep woods. At its foot flows the little river Yeure, which dividing at the spot into several streams, forms a number of marshy islands covered with willows. Though the castle has been consumed by lightning, and injured by the lapse of time, superadded to the depredations of the neighbouring peasants, yet its ruins are even now inexpressibly august and beautiful. I visited every part of it which

was acceſſible. The great tower is in high preſervation, and three of the apartments which appear to have been rooms of ſtate might almoſt be inhabited. The chamber where as tradition ſays, the unhappy prince breathed his laſt, is in one of the ſmaller towers, all entrance into which is obſtructed by the ſtones which have fallen from above. The whole edifice is compoſed of a ſtone nearly equal to marble in whiteneſs and durability. An enormous foſſé ſurrounds it. In the center is the chapel, the workmanſhip and delicacy of which excite aſtoniſhment. It appears to me to be one of the fineſt monuments now exiſting, of the taſte and ſtyle of architecture in the fifteenth century, when the arts began ſlowly to awake from their ſlumber of ſo many ages.

Charles the ſeventh is depictur'd by the French hiſtorians under much the ſame colours as Pope in his Iliad has drawn the portrait of Paris. Naturally brave, munificent, amiable, protecting and cultivating all the elegant occupations of a liberal

beral mind; but ſinking continually into an enervate weakneſs, and ſacrificing every grand or patriotic ſentiment to the ſeductive enchantment of female beauty.—The caſtle of Mehun appears never to have been the favourite reſidence of any ſucceeding king. It was neglected by Charles's immediate ſucceſſors, loſt in the ſuperior luſtre of Fontainbleau and Chambord under Francis the firſt, and ultimately ſold by Louis the fourteenth, to ſupport his ruinous and expenſive wars in the laſt century.

I purſued my journey through the Berri and Sologne to Orleans, where I arrived the enſuing day. The entrance is noble and ſtriking from the ſouth, over a fine bridge acroſs the Loire of nine arches. The city itſelf is in general very meanly built, and the ſtreets narrow to an exceſs, one only excepted which conducts from the bridge, and is compoſed of modern, elegant buildings. In this ſtands the celebrated monument, where Charles the ſeventh and the Maid of Orleans are

repreſented

repreſented kneeling before the body of Jeſus, extended on the Virgin's lap. It was erected by order of that monarch in 1458, to perpetuate his victories and triumph over the Engliſh. All the figures are in iron. The King appears bareheaded, and by him lies his helmet ſurmounted with a crown. Oppoſite to him is the Maid uncovered, and in the ſame attitude of grateful devotion to Heaven. It is a moſt precious and invaluable remain of antiquity.

In the "Hotel de Ville" is a portrait of the ſame extraordinary and immortal woman, which I ſtudied long and attentively. It was done in 1581, and is the eldeſt original extant. The painter ſeems to have drawn a flattering reſemblance, and to have decorated her with imaginary charms. Her face though long, is of exceeding beauty, heighten'd by an expreſſion of intelligence and grandeur rarely united. Her hair falls loofely down her back. She wears a ſort of bonnet, enriched

enriched with pearls and ſhaded with white plumes, tied under her chin with a fillet. About her neck is a little band, and lower down on her boſom, a necklace compoſed of ſmall links. Her habit, which is a woman's, I find difficult exactly to deſcribe. It fits cloſe to the body, and is cut or ſlaſhed at the arms and elbows. Round her waiſt is an embroider'd girdle, and in her right hand ſhe wields the ſword, with which ſhe expelled the enemies of her country. I am not ſurpriz'd at the animated and enthuſiaſtic attachment which the French ſtill cheriſh for her memory. The critical and deſperate emergency in which ſhe appeared; the phænomenon of her ſex, youth, and previous obſcurity; the unparallel'd ſucceſs which crowned her enterprize; the cruel and deteſtable ſentence by which ſhe expired; the air of the marvellous ſpread over the whole narration, encreaſed and ſtrengthened by that veneration which time affixes to every great event——all theſe united cauſes conſpire to place her

above

above mortality. Rome and Athens would have ranked her among the tutelary deities, and have erected temples to her worſhip; nor can I help being amazed, that amid the infinity of modern ſaints who croud and diſgrace their churches, no altar has yet been placed to the Maid of Orleans.

The environs of Orleans, more eſpecially in Sologne on the ſouthern ſide of the Loire, are very agreeable. It is in general a level country cover'd with corn and vines. I rode out during my ſtay there to "La Source." The villa is rendered celebrated by the abode of Lord Bolingbroke, who paſſed the chief part of his exile in this retreat. Near the houſe in a bottom, is the ſpring from which its name is derived. It may be regarded as a moſt extraordinary phænomenon. The water riſes out of the earth from a narrow aperture in a prodigious column, and forms immediately a beautiful and conſiderable river called the Loiret, which winds its courſe about two leagues, and is

then

then loſt in the Loire. Monſieur B——, to whom the place now belongs, has deform'd and totally diſfigur'd this charming fountain, by an ill-judged and miſtaken taſte. Inſtead of a dark and gloomy hollow ſhaded by deep woods, and adapted to the horror of the ſcene, in the midſt of which formerly roſe the column, the opening has been enlarged, and it now only appears to bubble up ſcarce above the ſurface of the earth, in the middle of a ſhallow artificial baſon. No trees or umbrage of any kind conceal or ſhelter it, and after paſſing through a narrow channel, it is diſperſed in form of a looking-glaſs before the houſe. It is impoſſible to view ſo ridiculous and abſurd a metamorphoſis, without the greateſt regret.

I left Orleans Sunday morning, and arrived here the ſame evening. A curioſity to viſit the tomb of Louis the eleventh, who is interred at "Notre Dame "de Clery," induced me to take that road though leſs direct. I paſſed the bridge

bridge of St. Meſmin with Brantome in my hand, and attempted, from his minute and exact deſcription, to aſcertain the ſpot where Francis duke of Guiſe was killed by Merè Poltrot.

The church of Clery was built by Louis the eleventh, who had always a ſingular and capricious devotion for the Virgin, to whom it is dedicated. He always denominated her "Ma bonne notre Dame de "Clery." From a ſimilar principle he ordered his body to be interred there, in a mauſoleum which he had himſelf erected. The Hugonots during the civil wars violated the tomb, and threw the bones about the church with ſavage ferocity. Louis the thirteenth cauſed a new monument to be miſed in 1622. It is of white marble and well executed. The king is in an attitude of prayer, his hands raiſed to heaven. His queen Charlotte of Savoy, was originally buried in the ſame tomb, and Charles the eighth cauſed his heart to be depoſited there near his father.

I croſſed

I croſſed the Loire again at Beaugency, and ſpent the whole afternoon in the gardens and groves of Menars. This was the ſeat of the celebrated Madame de Pompadour, who began to beautify the place, and bequeathed it at her death to the Marquis de Marigny her only brother. The ſituation, on a high range of hills overhanging the Loire, is of unparallel'd beauty; and the eye is continually regaled on every ſide with a proſpect the moſt extenſive, delicious and cultivated. Towns and palaces and caſtles, intermixed with foreſts, hamlets, abbeys and vineyards, are ſpread below. A noble river pouring through the vale, diffuſes plenty and fertility in its progreſs. The gardens themſelves are laid out with great elegance, and adorned with a number of ſtatues, chiefly preſented to the Marquis by his late Majeſty. A Paſiphaë lamenting Phaeton, and beginning to take root, detained me ſome minutes; but this figure was effaced by an Atlas, than

which nothing can be more perfect. The ſtatue is of more than human proportions. He is in the act of attempting to tear himſelf from the rock into which he is about to be transformed, and all his muſcles are in the moſt violent ſtate of exertion. The ſculptor has found means to give a ſort of ſuction to the ſtone, which appears to draw in his members, and in ſome parts to have taken poſſeſſion of them. It is a maſterpiece of workmanſhip.—— Monſieur de Marigny has prodigiouſly improved the place ſince the Marchioneſs of Pompadour's death. The terrace does not yield to that of Windſor or St. Germain; and the woods, through which winds a murmuring rivulet, are of the moſt lonely and ſecluded ſolitude. In the midſt of them, concealed under a thick umbrage appears a Cupid. He ſeems as juſt alighted on a pedeſtal covered with roſes. Nothing can exceed the archneſs of his regard. It makes one

one tremble—but he has his finger on his lips.

To-morrow you ſhall hear more. I am fatigued, but it is the fatigue of pleaſure. Ever yours.

Blois, Wedneſday, 15th May, 1776.

IT is impoſſible for the coldeſt boſom not to feel ſome emotions of pleaſure, at the view of a place ſo renowned in the page of hiſtory, as the city from whence I write. Judge then what I feel, who cannot behold the ſpot where any great atchievement has been performed in ages paſt, without the livelieſt enthuſiaſm! Imagine the ſenſations with which I look upon the caſtle, where Louis the twelfth, the father of his people was born; in which were ſolemniſed the nuptials of Margaret, ſiſter of Francis the firſt, and of the ſecond Margaret of Valois, wife of Henry the fourth! where Iſabella of Bavaria, Queen of France, and Mary of Medicis were impriſoned! within whoſe walls the Duke and Cardinal of Guiſe were ſacrificed to the vengeance of Henry the third! where Valentina of Milan, where Anne of Bretagne, where Claude her daughter, and Catherine of Medicis

ſo-

ſo renowned for her genius and her crimes, expired!—I tread with reverence over the ground, render'd in ſome degree ſacred, and view with a ſolemn delight the towers once inhabited by Queens and Monarchs, now tending to decay, or covered with ivy which ſpreads a twilight through the apartments at noon-day. An air of melancholy ſplendour and departed greatneſs is ſtrongly ſpread through the whole, and encreaſed by the ſilence which reigns univerſally. The cyphers and devices of ſucceeding princes are faintly diſcerned on the front of the edifice, or over the portals. I diſtinguiſh the Porcupine of Louis the twelfth, the Salamander of Francis, and the amorous Moon of his ſon Henry. I trace the remains of the gallery conſtructed by Henry the fourth, and enter the walk of elms planted by Catherine of Medicis; or ſurvey with regret the ſuperb and unfiniſhed palace of Gaſton duke of Orleans.——You muſt pardon theſe unconnected exclamations, which have eſcaped me in ſpite of

myſelf. I will now endeavour to give you ſome more methodical and intelligible deſcription of the caſtle.

It ſtands on a rock immediately above the Loire, and commanding a view hardly, if at all inferior to that of Menars. The ancient Counts of Blois held their conſtant reſidence here, and erected the firſt Chateau, of which no remains now ſubſiſt, except one large round tower. Guy, laſt Count of the houſe of Chatillon, ſold it to Louis Duke of Orleans brother to Charles the ſixth, and who was afterwards murdered in the "Rue Barbette" at Paris. It deſcended from him to Louis the twelfth his grandſon. The eaſtern and ſouthern ſides as they now ſubſiſt, are of his conſtruction. Over the grand gateway is an equeſtrian ſtatue of the King himſelf, habited in a coat of mail. The ſtyle of architecture merits attention. Some of the figures which ſupport the windows, are of a nature ſo incredibly indecent, of a laſciviouſneſs ſo ſtudied and groteſque, that one is ſur-

pris'd,

priſ'd in a pious century, how a prince ſuch as Louis the twelfth is depictur'd, or a Queen of manners ſo rigid and reſerved as Anne of Bretagne, could permit them to be placed in the moſt conſpicuous part of a royal palace. It is a ſtriking demonſtration of the groſs manners and impoliſhed barbariſm of the age.

The northern front of the caſtle was built by Francis the firſt, ſoon after his acceſſion to the throne. A more ſplendid ſtyle, a more coſtly workmanſhip approaching in delicacy and elegance to the Roman edifices, diſcriminate it from the former, and we evidently trace the improvement of an age more refined and liberal. The apartments are all noble, ſpacious and kingly. I was ſhewn the celebrated chamber in which Henry Duke of Guiſe was aſſaſſinated. The ſtone tinged with his blood, has been almoſt ſcraped away by the devotion or curioſity of different perſons. At the weſtern extremity of the building is the tower of Chateau-Regnaud, famous for

the murder of the Cardinal of Guiſe. I went into the dungeon where he paſſed the night previous to his execution, with the Archbiſhop of Lyons. Two doors of maſſy iron admit into a gloomy chamber vaulted, and only lighted by one ſmall window cloſed with a grate. The figure of the room is irregular. I meaſured it by my ſteps. It is twenty feet in diameter. In the center is a round hole big enough to receive the body of a man, and under it are three ranges of ſubterranean dungeons, one beneath the other. The Cardinal was put to death in a ſort of receſs hollowed in the wall reſembling a chimney, on the day following that of his brother the Duke. The guards executed their order with halberds.——They periſhed the juſt martyrs of an inordinate ambition; and this is almoſt the only murder mentioned in hiſtory, for which the circumſtances ſeem to plead a full exculpation.

At the eaſtern end of the northern front is the "Salle des Etats," where Henry the

the third aſſembled the ſtates twice during his reign. It is a vaſt hall now diſuſed and ruinous. In the chimney, the bodies of the Duke and Cardinal of Guiſe are ſaid to have been conſumed to aſhes. You will perhaps recollect the animated apoſtrophe of their mother to the ſtatue of Louis the twelfth, on receiving the news of her children's death. She was daughter to Reneè de Ferrara, and grand-daughter to that monarch. Henry the third ſent her a captive to Amboiſe, after the execution of her ſons. Having embarked on the Loire, ſhe turned towards the caſtle, and invoking with lifted arms the ſhade of her great anceſtor, "Ah! grand "Roi," exclaimed ſhe, "avez vous fait "batir ce Chateau, pour y faire mourir "les enfans de votre petite fille?"

The weſtern face is the work of Gaſton Duke of Orleans, ſon of Henry the fourth, and brother to Louis the thirteenth. It is a beautiful and princely edifice, but unhappily left incomplete by his death. Manſard was the architect, and more than

than three hundred thouſand livres were uſeleſsly expended on this ſumptuous building, which is uninhabitable and already far gone in decay. Gaſton prognoſticated before his deceaſe the future ſtate of ruin in which it would be left, and exclaimed as he lay expiring, by a prophetic anticipation, "Domus mea, domus deſolationis in eternum!" All the other deſigns and plans of alteration he had begun were buried with him.

The gardens of the caſtle which were formerly very extenſive, are now converted into private property. The ſuperb gallery erected by Henry the fourth to divide the upper and lower ones, is only to be traced in its remains, as it was demoliſhed about thirteen years ago by order of the court. Catherine of Medicis's walk is however undeſtroyed. It is of a prodigious length, extending to the foreſt of Blois, and formed an avenue to the palace truly royal.

I went yeſterday to Chambord, the famous palace of Francis the firſt. It is about four leagues from hence, on the

ſouthern

ſouthern ſide of the Loire. In a level ſituation embоſomed in woods ſtands this fabric which has all the appearance of one of Taſſo's or Arioſto's enchanted caſtles, raiſed out of the earth by ſubtle magic. The enormous magnitude of the whole ſtructure crowned with turrets, pinnacles, domes, and towers innumerable, over which the lapſe of two centuries begins to throw an air of decay and waning ſplendour, produce an effect on the beholder not to be communicated by deſcription. Thick foreſts inveſt it round on all ſides, and in front flows or rather ſtagnates a little river called the Couſſon, black and full of ſedges. The palace, conformable to the taſte of the century in which it was built is moated round; but the architecture though ſtrictly Gothic, is full of beauty and breathes no air of barbariſm. A grand ſtair-caſe in the center conducts to the different ranges of apartments. By a ſingular contrivance it is render'd double, and two perſons go up or down at the

ſame

ſame time without ſeeing each other. I cannot pretend to explain, or give you an exact idea of this enigma in building, but it is curious and unique in its kind.

The chambers though now unfurniſhed and beginning to feel the ravages of time, are ſtill regal and magnificent. Thoſe occupied by the late Marechal Saxe are not totally deſtitute of furniture, and have been in ſome degree modernized. In many of them are buttreſſes or beams ſtretched acroſs, to ſupport the roof; they exceedingly deform the appearance of the rooms. Catherine of Medicis who had been informed by an aſtrologer, that ſhe was in danger of being cruſhed under the ruins of a houſe, cauſed them to be placed from the terror of this prediction.

I enquired much after the pane of glaſs, on which were ſeen the two lines written by the hand of Francis the firſt with a diamond. They were in a little cabinet communicating with the chapel, but are now loſt by ſome accident. They were theſe:

" Toute

« Toute Femme varie:
« Mal habil qui s'y fie!"—

Some chagrin, cauſed by his miſtreſs's change or inconſtancy probably gave riſe to the ſarcaſm on the ſex.

Immenſe ſums of money were expended in the erection of Chambord, and eighteen hundred workmen employed during twelve years to complete it. There are ſaid to be twelve hundred large, and four hundred ſmaller apartments or cabinets in the palace. Francis entertained the Emperor Charles the fifth there, with his accuſtom'd munificence and ſplendour, during the viſit which he paid him on the rebellion of the Gantois in 1540. Henry the ſecond made ſome additions and embelliſhments to it. His father's device, a Salamander in the flames is ſeen in almoſt every part; and on a ſmall tower are thoſe of Henry himſelf, a Moon in form of a creſcent and the letter H.

After having ſpent more than three hours in the different galleries or apartments, I ſat down on the bank of the rivulet in

front of the edifice, to contemplate it at leiſure. I ſpread my cold proviſions on the graſs, under the ſhade of two ancient elms, and after having dined, reſigned myſelf to all that train of reflection, which the view of ſo auguſt a monument muſt naturally excite.

Since the deceaſe of Marechal Saxe Chambord is going faſt to decay. Louis the fourteenth made ſeveral viſits to it for the pleaſure of the chace; but his ſucceſſor totally neglected it, and many hundred thouſand livres would now be requiſite to render it fit to receive a ſovereign. Its immenſe magnitude which requires continual repairs, will accelerate its downfall, and motives of œconomy probably produce, in ſome future time its entire demolition.

The city of Blois is meanly built, and many of the houſes may diſpute antiquity with the caſtle. It lies on the declivity of a hill along the northern bank of the river, and is joined to a conſiderable ſuburb on the oppoſite ſide by a modern

bridge. No language can paint in colours ſufficiently glowing the beauty of the Loire, or the fertility of the country through which it flows. The extreme poverty and miſery of the peaſants, amid a delicious paradiſe producing luxuriantly all the delicacies and elegancies of life, impreſſes with mingled pity, wonder and indignation. I behold much magnificence, and more diſtreſs; one Chateau, ſurrounded with a thouſand wretched hamlets; a luxury the moſt ſtudied and enervate, contraſted with beggary and nakedneſs among the people; a gaiety, an enjouëment, a ſoftneſs and urbanity univerſally characteriſtic of every rank, and to which it is impoſſible to refuſe attachment and admiration.

To-morrow morning I continue my progreſs ſlowly along the Loire. Meanwhile farewell!

Tours,

Tours, Tueſday, 21ſt of May, 1776.

THE road from Blois to this city is one of the moſt agreeable in France, along the high dyke of the river. Hills, whoſe ſides are covered with vines, foreſts, amid which appear ſpires and villas, or wide plains cultivated with the moſt aſſiduous induſtry, continually diverſify and enliven the ſcene.

I ſtop'd during more than two hours to view the caſtle of Chaumont. It is built on a high promontory about five leagues below Blois, on the ſouthern bank of the Loire, and commanding a moſt extenſive proſpect. The pile is Gothic, and was conſtructed about the middle of the fifteenth century by the Lords of the houſe of Amboiſe. The Cardinal of that name, the virtuous and incorrupt miniſter of Louis the twelfth, was born there, and the devices of the family are yet diſtinctly traced on the great towers of the edifice.

edifice. They are two letters ℭ and a volcano; this, by a ſort of pun which in that age was much admir'd, formed the word "Chau-Mont." Henry the ſecond preſented it to his miſtreſs Diana de Poitiers, ſo celebrated in the annals of France. She beautified and enlarg'd it; the hunting horn, one of her emblems, appears in many parts of the building. On the death of her royal lover in 1559, Catherine of Medicis, who had long envied her the poſſeſſion, rather compelled than requeſted the ducheſs to renounce it in her favour; but by an act of generoſity worthy a queen, ſhe gave her in return the palace of Chenonceaux-ſur-Cher. Soon after the death of Catherine, it fell into the Viſcount de Sardini's hands, a Lucqueſe nobleman, who had married a lady of the houſe of Limeüil, diſtantly allied to that princeſs by blood. His deſcendants are now extinct. — Exactly oppoſite to it, about a mile from the Loire ſtands the caſtle of Onzain, in which Louis prince of Condé, ſlain at

Jarnac, was impriſoned by Catherine of Medicis after the battle of Dreux, and during the ſiege of Orleans.

I arrived at Amboiſe the ſame evening. The town is mean and ill built, but has been rendered famous in ſtory by the conſpiracy in 1560, which opened the fatal wars of Calviniſm and Coligni. The caſtle is ſituated on a craggy rock, extremely difficult of acceſs, and the ſides of which deſcend almoſt perpendicular. At its foot flows the Loire, which is divided into two ſtreams by a ſmall iſland. I am not ſurprized that the duke of Guiſe, in the apprehenſion of an inſurrection among the Hugonots, choſe to remove Francis the ſecond to this fortreſs, as to a place of perfect ſafety. Only two detached parts of the ancient Chateau now remain, one of which was erected by Charles the eighth, and the other by Francis the firſt. It is unneceſſary to remind you that the former of thoſe princes was born and expired here. From the hill behind the caſtle, is beheld an-

other of thoſe luxurious and enchanting landſcapes, which theſe provinces of France continually exhibit, and where the eye wanders delighted amid a rich profuſion of natural beauties.

I went the enſuing day to Chanteloup, the palace of Monſieur de Choiſeul, about a mile from Amboiſe. Neither the ſituation nor the expoſure are eligible. It commands a very limited proſpect, and the Loire, though at ſo inconſiderable a diſtance, is ſcarce ſeen even from the upper apartments. The rooms which I was permitted to view, though ſplendid, were deſtitute of paintings or marbles, and fell far ſhort of the magnificent ideas I had been taught to preconceive. The Duke has ſpent immenſe ſums on this palace, and is at preſent employed in the erection of additional chambers, which will ſurpaſs thoſe already finiſhed in grandeur and elegance.

I continued my journey to this city. Tours is built in a fine plain on the ſouthern bank of the Loire. The ſur-

rounding country ſurpaſſes all I have yet ſeen in fertility and luxuriancy, and every eminence within ſeveral miles of the place is occupied by convents or villas which pleaſure or ſuperſtition have erected. Among the monaſteries is the celebrated one of Marmoutier, from whence Iſabella queen of Charles the ſixth was carried off by the duke of Burgundy, in 1417.

I made an excurſion yeſterday to Loches, which is ten leagues diſtant, through a delicious plain watered by the Cher, the Indre, and a number of rivulets that fertilize the meadows through which they run. The caſtle of Loches is exceedingly renowned in the hiſtory of France, and was in former ages the uſual place of confinement for priſoners of the higheſt quality. Its origin remounts to the moſt remote antiquity, nor does tradition itſelf pretend to aſcertain its founder, or the æra of its conſtruction. Succeſſive ſovereigns enlarged, rebuilt and fortified it. Charles the ſeventh frequently held his court and reſidence there during the former

former part of his reign; and the duke of Alençon, a prince of the blood, was detained there a captive by that monarch's order, on account of his treasonable practices for the introduction of the English into the kingdom. —— In one of the apartments, is the iron cage in which Louis the eleventh confined the Cardinal de la Balue more than nine years. It is an inhuman engine of punishment. The form is square, and the diameter not above eleven feet. He was at length released in 1481, at the intercession of the sovereign Pontiff, and during the state of debility which preceded the king's death.

I went to view the chamber where the perfidious Ludovico Sforza the Moor was imprisoned by Louis the twelfth, from the year 1500 to 1510. It is a large apartment vaulted, and in that century not improper for the confinement of a sovereign prince. One window, secured by three gratings of iron, admits light into the room, and in the midst of summer the rays of the sun enter through

it about the hour of noon for a few minutes. Exactly oppoſite to the window on the wall, are diſtinctly traced the remains of a dial or meridian, upon which the ſun beams played; and which, as long and uniform tradition relates, was engraven by the hand of Sforza to enliven his hours of ſolitude. Over the chimney is the figure of a head cover'd with a caſque, ſuppoſed to be his. The walls and roof are likewiſe covered with characters and inſcriptions now rendered illegible by the lapſe of time.

I quitted this chamber, and deſcended with my guide by the light of a torch into the "Oubliettes," or ſubterranean dungeons. They are Labyrinths hollowed into the earth, of a vaſt extent and totally deſtitute of light. The air itſelf was ſo moiſt and unwholeſome, that the flambeau was almoſt extinguiſhed by it. The man who attended me, made me obſerve in many places of the incumbent rock, round holes through which the wretched victims deſtined to periſh in theſe caverns

were

were let down. Doors of maſſy iron cloſe up the entrance, and preclude all poſſibility of ſuccour or eſcape. I was glad to leave theſe diſmal abodes of darkneſs and horror, to reviſit the chearful day.—— The greater part of the caſtle is now in a ſtate of ruin. It is notwithſtanding ſtill made uſe of to confine perſons accuſed of ſtate crimes, and there is at preſent a gentleman ſhut up for unknown cauſes, who has been here more than three years.

In the church, before the high altar, is interr'd the celebrated Agnes Soreille, miſtreſs to Charles the ſeventh. The monument is compoſed of black marble, and on it is her effigy cut in white alabaſter. If it may be ſuppoſed to reſemble her perſon, ſhe was feminine and delicate to the utmoſt degree of which the human body is ſuſceptible. The face is perfectly correſpondent to the other parts, and conveys an idea of uncommon lovelineſs mixed with exquiſite fragility. Her hands which are joined in prayer are models of ſymmetry and proportion. Round her head is a

broad fillet enriched with pearls, and a ſort of necklace compoſed of the ſame ornaments falls on her boſom. She repoſes on an embroider'd cuſhion; her dreſs is ſimple, modeſt, concealing her limbs from view, and at her feet are two lambs emblematical of her name, Agnes. Time which reſpects not even beauty, has begun to injure and deface the figure and the tomb in many parts. I hung over it with extreme ſatisfaction during ſome minutes, in ſilence. It was not merely the conſciouſneſs of the charms ſhe once poſſeſſed that detained and affected me:—the magnanimous heroiſm which actuated her conduct, and which ſhe infus'd into her lover ſinking under the preſſure of his enemies, render her memory deſervedly dear to every mind where patriotiſm is not extinct. Among the many favourites of princes whom hiſtory has preſerved from oblivion, none appears to have been more worthy a monarch's attachment, none ſo deſervedly conſecrated to eternal remembrance. You will recollect I doubt not, the verſes of

Francis the firſt in her honour, which particularly allude to her efforts to inſpire Charles the ſeventh with fortitude and courage againſt the Engliſh, the invaders of his dominions.——A thouſand fables and traditions reſpecting her are yet preſerved among the inhabitants of Loches: her beauty, her liberality, and her empire over the king form the principal ſubjects. I liſtened to them all with extreme ſatisfaction; and went to look at the tower, which is called "La Tour de la belle Agnes," and in which, as my conductor aſſured me with great ſimplicity, Charles uſed from motives of jealouſy, to lock her up when he went to the chace.——It is certain ſhe reſided frequently at Beaulieu, a little town only divided from Loches by the river Indre, and where are ſtill ſeen the remains of a Chateau which belonged to her. As ſhe expir'd at the abbey of Jumieges in Normandy, her body was brought by her expreſs command to this church, to which during her lifetime ſhe had made very ample donations.

Louis

Louis the eleventh, though he neither honour'd his father's memory, nor reſpected Agnes, whom it is pretended he once ſtruck at Chinon in Touraine, yet protected her remains, and refuſed permiſſion to the canons, who by an act of ingratitude to their benefactreſs petitioned for the removal and demolition of her tomb.

I had always read and been informed, that Ludovico Sforza duke of Milan was likewiſe buried in the chancel of the ſame church, under a plate of copper. All the French writers—even their beſt hiſtorians aſſert it as an inconteſtable fact.—There is notwithſtanding nothing more falſe, and it is one of thoſe many errors which long preſcription has ſanctified. The plate of copper indeed exiſts; but one of the prieſts obligingly read to me the inſcription on it, which is to the memory of a private family. A portrait of a warrior kneeling and in prayer, which has been always ſhewn as Sforza's figure, the ſame perſon aſſured me is that of the duke of Epernon.—No traces of any ſuch interment

interment are to be found among the records of the church, though that of Agnes Soreille, anterior by ſixty years yet exiſts.——I muſt own this contradiction to ſo received an opinion may appear extraordinary;—but how many hiſtorical narrations depend upon as dubious and uncertain a baſis!

I am juſt returned from the caſtle of Pleſſez-les-Tours, ſo famous for the death of Louis the eleventh. Do you remember Cominès's minute and terrifying picture of that monarch's exit?—I felt a ſecret horror as I entered the court and ſurvey'd the walls once covered with iron ſpikes, where a continual guard kept watch during the laſt, ſad hours of the guilty and expiring monarch. It is only half a league from this city, in a plain ſurrounded by woods, at a little diſtance from the Loire. The building is yet handſome though compos'd of brick, and now converted to purpoſes of commerce. In the chapel, on the right hand of the high altar, is a maſterly and beautiful portrait

portrait of Louis himſelf. He is clad in complete armour. Within his left arm, repoſing on his breaſt, is a ſtandard, and with his right hand he takes off his helmet, in act of ſalutation to the Virgin and her infant. His harſh and unpleaſing features are ſoftened into a ſmile of pleaſure and complacency. He ſeems to extend his left hand towards the child, whoſe eye is fix'd on his with eagerneſs. Theſe indications of tenderneſs have given room to ſuppoſe, that under the figures of Mary and Jeſus, are deſigned Charlotte of Savoy his queen, and Charles the eighth his ſon. Her habit which is regal, the diadem on her brow, and more than all, a reſemblance between the infant and the king which is ſtrikingly evident, confirm ſtrongly this ſuppoſition.

Though Tours is at preſent an unpleaſant and ill built place, it will probably be greatly changed in a few years. A very noble bridge of fifteen arches is already conſtructed acroſs the river, and a

ſtreet

ſtreet planned which will interſect the whole city. Theſe alterations will prodigiouſly embelliſh it.

My journey begins now to draw towards its termination. You will yet hear once or twice from Yours, &c.

Mans,

Mans, Tuesday, 28th of May, 1776.

IT is with regret I find myself at a distance from the banks of the Loire, along which I have wander'd with so sensible a pleasure. The beauty of the country on either side, the number of magnificent edifices reflected in its surface, the solemn majesty of its course amid islands, woods, and delicious plains, or under high and hanging rocks, conspire to awaken at this enchanting season sentiments of extreme delight.

At Langeais about seven leagues from Tours, I stop'd to examine the remains of the castle. They are yet noble, though decayed and ruinous. It is rendered celebrated in history by the nuptials of Anne of Bretagne with Charles the eighth, which were solemnized there in 1488. I arriv'd at Saumur the same evening. You may imagine that I could not find myself only five leagues distant from the abbey of Fontevrauld, where Henry the second and

Richard

Richard the firſt of England are interred, without a deſire to viſit the place. It is ſituated in a hollow valley near the confines of Anjou towards Touraine. Rocky hills riſe behind it, and thick woods conceal it almoſt entirely from view. An air of melancholy and ſilent ſequeſtration reigns on all ſides, peculiarly characteriſtic of, and ſuitable to the gloomy devotion of monaſtic life. As I walked under the high and venerable rows of elm in the gardens of the convent, it was impoſſible not to feel in ſome degree thoſe ſolemn and awful ſenſations which theſe religious ſolitudes naturally inſpire.—The abbey was founded in 1096 by Robert d'Arbriſſel. Its reputation for ſanctity, and its vicinity to the city of Chinon where Henry the ſecond expir'd, were probably the chief cauſes of his being interr'd there, ſince none of his progenitors the Counts of Anjou had choſen it as their place of burial. You will remember that ſentiments of penitence and contrition for his filial diſobedience, induced Richard to order

order in his dying moments, that his body ſhould be laid at the feet of his father. Eleanor of Aquitain, wife of the one and mother of the other prince, repoſes in the ſame tomb; as do likewiſe Jane Counteſs of Provence and Queen of Sicily daughter to Henry the ſecond, and Elizabeth d'Angouleſme widow of John King of England.—The figures of all theſe ſovereigns are executed in ſtone, upon the monument: but as it is at preſent enclofed within the grate, in that part of the choir where the Abbeſs and Nuns aſſemble for public devotion, no intereſt or intreaties could poſſibly procure me admittance into this ſacred partition; and I was conſequently prevented from ſtudying it either ſo cloſely, or with that minute attention which I deſir'd. Four ſolemn Requiems and ſervices are ſaid every year for the repoſe of the ſouls of theſe princes, and the tomb was repaired and beautified in 1638 by order of the Abbeſs.

Fontevrauld,

Fontevrauld, beſides its high antiquity, has been ever conſidered as one of the moſt honorary and important eccleſiaſtical benefices in France. Many princeſſes of the blood have ſucceſſively governed it. The revenues are immenſe. The number of religious of both ſexes under the Abbeſs's direction amount to more than two hundred, and her authority both temporal and ſpiritual is exceedingly extenſive.

I returned to Saumur at night, and left it again laſt Saturday. The town is ſmall, but pleaſantly ſituated on the Loire, acroſs which is a long bridge continued through a number of iſlands. It was anciently a moſt important paſs over the river, and of conſequence frequently and fiercely diſputed by either party during the civil wars in the ſixteenth century. The fortifications are of prodigious ſtrength, and Henry the fourth, in the reconciliation which took place between him and Henry the third near Tours in 1589, demanded Saumur as one of the cities of ſafety to be delivered him. The caſtle overlooks

the town and river. It is built on a lofty eminence, and is now only valuable as a ſtate priſon, where perſons of rank are confined. The Kings of Sicily and Dukes of Anjou of the ſecond line, who ſprung from John and Philip of Valois, frequently reſided there, as it conſtituted a part of their Angevin dominions or Appennage. It has yet a venerable and magnificent appearance.

The diſtance from Saumur to Angers is about thirteen leagues, the greater part along the bank of the Loire. Anjou appears to me not to yield in fertility or beauty to any province of the kingdom. Wines of the moſt delicious and exquiſite flavour are produced in it. That of Champigny, a little village near Fontevrauld, is particularly admir'd.—I made a ſtay of two days in Angers. The city ſtands in a plain, and is divided into "La "haute" and "La baſſe ville" by the river Mayenne, which winds through meadows, and is loſt in the Loire five miles below the place. The caſtle was

built by St. Louis, about the middle of the thirteenth century. The walls, foſſes, and numerous towers which yet ſubſiſt, evince its former magnificence; and its ſituation in the center of the city, on a rock overhanging the river, conduces to diffuſe over it an air of kingly grandeur, though ſunk in decay. It was the principal reſidence of the Kings of Sicily, as Dukes of Anjou, but is at preſent in a ſtate of complete and total ruin. The cathedral is a venerable ſtructure, and though it has undergone many alterations in the courſe of ages ſince its conſtruction, the architecture is ſingular and merits ſtudy. Here ſleeps with her anceſtors the renown'd Margaret daughter of René King of Sicily, and Queen of Henry the ſixth of England. She expir'd, after her many intrepid but ineffectual efforts to replace her huſband on the throne, at the caſtle of Dampierre in Anjou in 1482. The Engliſh hiſtorians ſeem never to have follow'd this illuſtrious Princeſs into her retreat, after Louis the eleventh had ran-

ſom'd her from Edward the fourth, and procur'd her releaſe from the Tower of London. She was the favourite child of René, who renounc'd all his claims on the provinces of Anjou and Lorrain, to obtain her freedom. Under his protection ſhe remained at Aix in Provence, till his death neceſſitated her to return into the Angevin territories. She was receiv'd by an antient gentleman nam'd Vignole, who had been long in her father's ſervice, and afforded her an aſylum. Henry Earl of Richmond who afterwards triumphed at Boſworth, and was then a fugitive in Bretagne, came from Vannes to viſit her and demand her counſels. She urged him to his attempt againſt Richard the third, though ſhe did not ſurvive to be a witneſs of its ſucceſs. No remains of that commanding beauty, of thoſe numerous attractions which ſhe had once poſſeſs'd, accompanied her in the decline of life. A French writer has drawn the portrait of Margaret when near her end; it impreſſes with mingled

horror and compaſſion. You will not recognize the Queen deſcrib'd by our hiſtorians in ſuch enchanting colours. ——"Son ſang corrompu par tant de "noires agitations, devint comme une "poiſon qui infecta toutes les parties "qu'il devoit nourrir; ſa peau ſecha "juſqu' à s'en aller en pouſſiere; ſon "eſtomac ſe retrecit, et ſes yeux auſſi "creux que s'ils euſſent été enfoncés avec "violence, perdirent tout le feu qui avoit "ſervi ſi long temps d'interprete aux "grands ſentimens de ſon ame."

Angers is of a very conſiderable ſize, but the buildings and ſtreets are almoſt as mean and antient as thoſe of Bourges. The walls with which John king of England ſurrounded it in 1214, remain nearly entire, and are of a prodigious circumference.

I ſlept at La Fleche laſt night. It is a pretty town on the confines of Anjou. In the church which belong'd to the Jeſuits, are the hearts of Henry the fourth and Mary of Medecis, which were depoſit-

ed there in conſequence of their expreſs command. I enter'd the province of Maine this morning. It is ten leagues from La Fleche to Mans, through a country much enclos'd and finely wooded.——The ſituation of this city is pleaſant and eligible, near the junction of two little rivers which ſerpentine through a delicious plain. I went to the top of the cathedral, to enjoy one of the fineſt inland proſpects to be imagined. Towards Normandy and Perche it is loſt in clouds at a great diſtance. On the ſide of Bretagne extends the foreſt of Mans, where lay the ſcene of that extraordinary phantom which is ſaid to have appeared to Charles the ſixth, and was the principal cauſe of his unhappy madneſs. Mans is a ſmall city, but preferable to Angers in it's conſtruction. It conſtituted together with the province of which it is the capital, a part of our Henry the ſecond's natural and hereditary dominions, which he added to thoſe devolved to him at Stephen king of England's death in right of his mother Matilda,

tilda. In 1216 Philip Auguſtus reconquer'd it from John, and annex'd it to the crown of France.

I continue my journey in the evening to Alençon. Adieu!

Rouen, Monday, 3d June, 1776.

IT was already late when I quitted Mans, and as Alençon is twelve leagues diſtant, I was obliged to ſtop at a little town named "Beaumont-Le-Viſcomte," ſituated on the ſide of a ſteep hill, at the foot of which runs a rivulet. A delicious landſcape is beheld on all ſides, richly cultivated. It is near the confines of Maine and Normandy. I got to Alençon the enſuing morning. The place is of conſiderable ſize, and ſtands in the midſt of an extenſive plain. The little river Sarte waſhes its walls. I ſlept at Seez, an ancient city, and continued my route next day to L'Aigle. It is a ſmall town, but known in hiſtory by its caſtle, of which ſcarce any traces now remain. Our annals inform us that William the Conqueror frequently reſided there in his viſits to theſe his hereditary dominions; and Charles d'Eſpagne de la Cer-

da,

da, Conſtable of France under the reign of John, was ſurpriz'd and murder'd in it by Charles the Bad King of Navarre, in the year 1354.

I croſſed a conſiderable tract of country from L'Aigle to Evreux. This latter city is ſituate in a hollow vale ſurrounded with lofty hills. The cathedral is a noble ſtructure, though irregular in its external form. I arrived here laſt Friday. Rouen is too well known and too frequently viſited, to render any deſcription of it neceſſary. The Seine is of unequalled beauty above and below the place, cover'd with little iſlands overgrown with wood, and flowing under a range of mountains. At one extremity of the city near the river, are yet beheld the remains of the palace which Henry the fifth of England began in 1419, and which was compleated under his unfortunate ſon in 1443. At an inconſiderable diſtance from it is the "Tour de la Pucelle," in which the Duke of Bedford confin'd the Maid of Orleans previous to her trial and condemnation,

demnation. You will recollect her conſequent execution and death. A ſtatue is erected to her on the ſpot where this cruel ſentence was perform'd, and an inſcription engraven beneath it in her honour. Who would not die to merit two of the lines which compoſe it?

——" Exuit flammis quod mortale,
" Supereſt gloria nunquam moritura!"——

They exalt her above mortality. They inroll her to the moſt remote poſterity, with the great ſpirits who in different ages have ſacrificed their lives at the ſhrine of their country. It is the moſt ſublime and enviable tribute which man can pay to virtue.

I went yeſterday morning to viſit a little priory, call'd "Notre Dame de bonnes Nou-" velles," which is on the ſouthern bank of the Seine. It was founded by William the Conqueror before his ſucceſsful attempt on the Engliſh crown. Tradition ſays that Matilda his wife being at her devotions in this church, intelligence arrived

that

that the duke of Normandy had gained the important battle of Haſtings; and from this circumſtance it obtained the name it bears at preſent. Matilda, daughter of Henry the firſt and mother of Henry the ſecond was buried there; but ſix hundred years have eraſed the inſcription on her tomb, of which there are now no veſtiges diſcernible. This princeſs as ducheſs of Normandy reſided at Rouen, and conſtructed the ancient bridge acroſs the Seine; the ruins yet ſubſiſt, though it began to fall as early as the year 1502, and became totally uſeleſs before the concluſion of the ſixteenth century.

The cathedral is one of the moſt magnificent monuments of Gothic architecture in France. It was erected under William the Conqueror's reign, and compleated in 1063. I tread with reverence among the tombs of kings and princes interred in different parts of the edifice. Here lies Rollo the Dane, founder of the Norman line deſtin'd to aſcend the Engliſh throne; a fabled hero loſt in the barbariſm

barbariſm of the times when he flouriſh'd! Two of his deſcendants, Dukes of Normandy, are buried near him.—The heart of Richard the firſt King of England, which when dying he ordered to be depoſited in the cathedral of Rouen, is on the right hand of the high altar. It was originally preſerv'd in a vaſt ſhrine of maſſy ſilver; but in the extreme diſtreſs occaſion'd by the want of money to defray the expences of St. Louis's ranſom when taken priſoner in Damieta, it was converted to the neceſſities of the ſtate. His elder brother prince Henry, who died at the caſtle of Martel in Quercy in 1183, reſts on the oppoſite ſide. Near theſe, repoſes John duke of Bedford; an illuſtrious name rever'd even by his enemies, and almoſt deſtitute of a blemiſh if he had not authoriz'd the death of the Maid of Orleans, the deliverer of her country. Behind the altar under a monument of exquiſite workmanſhip, is inter'd the great Cardinal of Amboiſe, miniſter to Louis the twelfth, whom France will ever

honour

honour while patriotism and integrity are cherished among men. His effigy is represented on the tomb, kneeling and in prayer. I stood long to consider that of Louis de Brezé, Senechal of Normandy and Count de Maulevrier; he died in 1531. The figure of the Count himself extended as dead, is one of the most masterly and beautiful productions which sculpture can exhibit. On one side is the Virgin; on the other appears his widow the celebrated Diana de Poitiers, afterwards the favour'd mistress of Henry the second. She looks down on the body of her husband; grief is marked in her features, and her habit appears to be that of a mourner. The whole is of an execution the most delicate and perfect.

Rouen, though large and commercial is not an elegant city. The streets are almost all narrow, ill pierced and dirty; the buildings, ancient and irregular. It was fortified by St. Louis in 1253, but the walls are now mostly demolished. The environs, more peculiarly the hills

which

which overlook the Seine are wondrouſly agreeable, and covered with magnificent villas.

My ſtay here will be very ſhort. I purpoſe to repaſs at Dieppe, and ſhall probably rejoin you in a few days. — I have compleated the deſign which I laid down at my departure, that of viſiting the unfrequented provinces of France. Throughout my whole tour I have ſtudiouſly endeavour'd to avoid the ground uſually trod by the Engliſh in their paſſage from Calais into Italy, as too well known to afford you any information. It only remains to claim for the whole your candour and indulgence; on that I repoſe myſelf, and remain

Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

N. WRAXALL, Jun.

FINIS.

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